

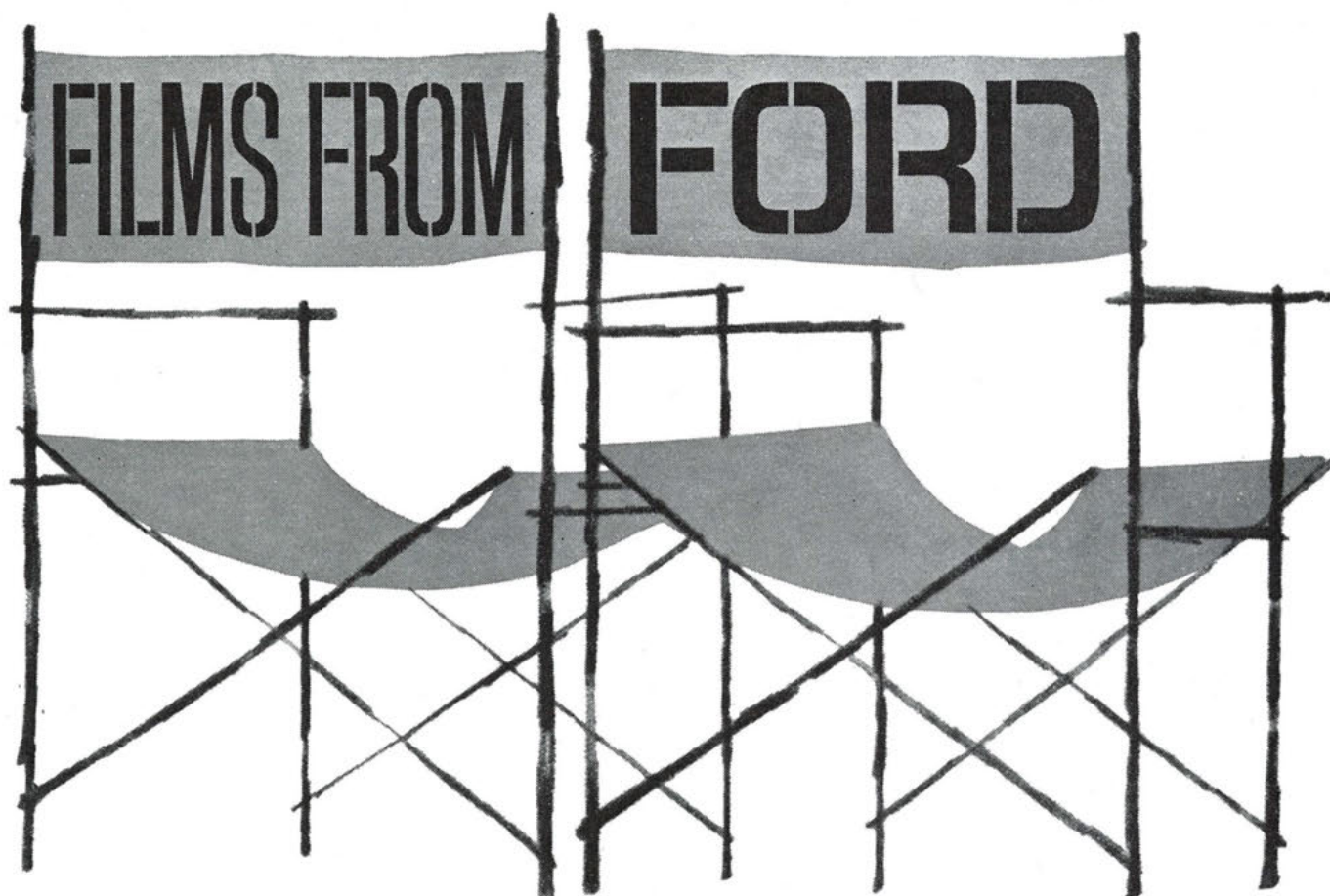


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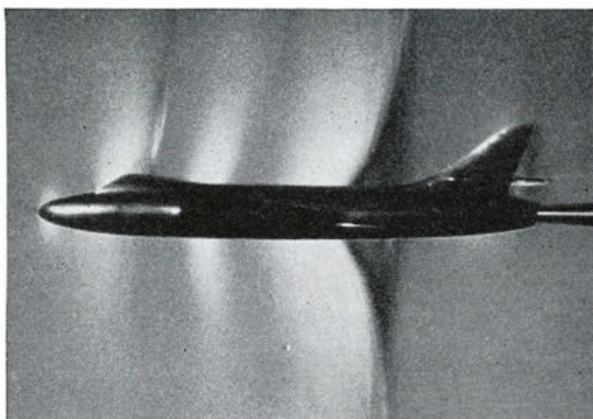
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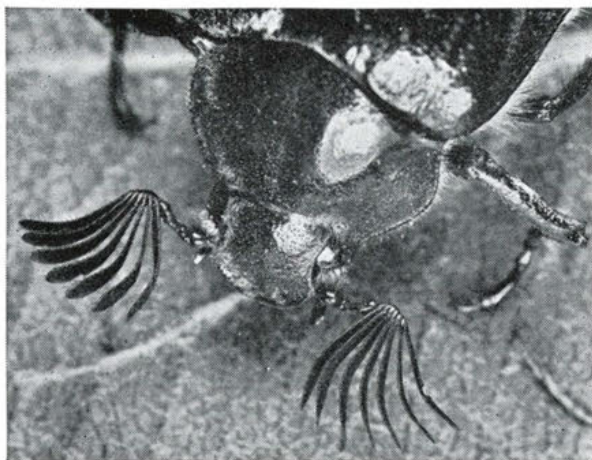
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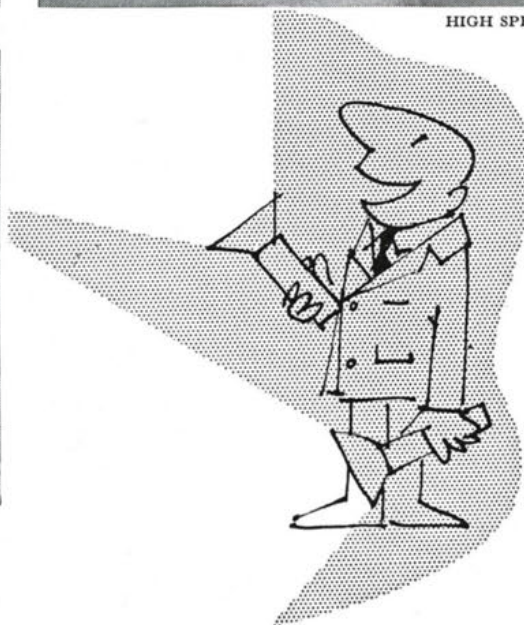
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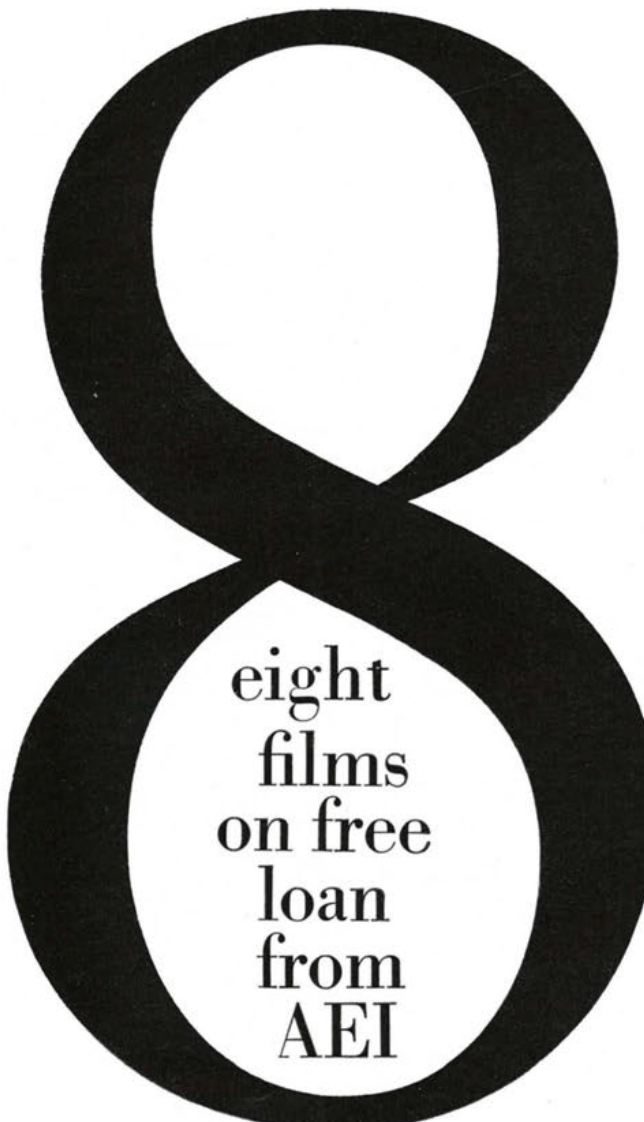
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SIGHT AND SOUND

THE INTERNATIONAL FILM QUARTERLY

CONTENTS

WINTER

1961/62

VOLUME 31 NO. 1

FEATURES

- 3 The Front Page
- 10 Top Ten
- 15 New York Letter: CECILE STARR
- 16 In the Picture
- 24 John Huston's *Freud*
- 50 Correspondence
- 52 Current Film Guide

ARTICLES

- 4 Fantasies of the Art House Audience:
PAULINE KAEI
- 18 The New Frontiers:
PETER JOHN DYER
- 22 Erich von Stroheim: the legend and the
fact: DENIS MARION
- 26 Resnais' *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad*;
Antonioni's *La Notte*:
PENELOPE HOUSTON, GEOFFREY
NOWELL-SMITH
- 32 In the Common Market: a wider
screen for Britain:
THE ECONOMIST INTELLIGENCE UNIT
- 35 Interview with François Truffaut:
LOUIS MARCORELLES
- 43 The Nine Lives of Dr. Mabuse:
JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR
- 47 The Care of the Past: JAY LEYDA

FILM REVIEWS

- 38 Innocent Sorcerers *and* Paris Nous
Appartient: ROBERT VAS
- 39 The Innocents: PENELOPE HOUSTON
- 40 Too Late Blues *and* The Hustler:
PHILIP OAKES
- 41 Judgment at Nuremberg:
JOHN GILLET
- 41 Breakfast at Tiffany's: JAMES BREEN
- 42 Bachelor Flat: PETER JOHN DYER
- 42 Pocketful of Miracles:
PENELOPE HOUSTON
- 42 The Knife: PETER JOHN DYER

BOOK REVIEWS

- 49 Mr. Laurel and Mr. Hardy *and*
Harpo Speaks: DAVID ROBINSON

ON THE COVER: Monica Vitti and Alain Delon in Antonioni's recently completed *The Eclipse*. Delon plays a young stockbroker's agent, and the film was shot on location in Rome and Verona.

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"West Side Story".



THE FRONT PAGE

TO THE CRITIC, looking around at the end of a year in the cinema, there's always a temptation to try to wrap the whole package up under one neat label. "The year of Bergman"; "the year of the New Wave": such labels could be made to stick. 1961, however, firmly resists any such attempt at parcelling. It's been, to a fairly noticeable extent, a year of absenteeism. London has seen nothing from Antonioni or Resnais (though at the time of writing *La Notte* and *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad* are waiting in the wings), nothing from Hitchcock, Stevens, Wyler, Wilder, Minnelli; nothing from Reed or Lean; nothing from Fellini, Bresson, Tati, Renoir.

In fact, and overwhelmingly, the most notable films have come from new or unexpected sources. And this, apart from adding the stimulus of discovery, has led to some spirited critical dissension. The films which dominated the 1961 London Festival—*Accattone*, *Lola*, *Une Femme est une Femme*, *Une Aussi Longue Absence*—broke the rules, or made up their own rules. So, in the specialised cinemas, did *A Bout de Souffle* and *The Connection*. These are the private voices of the cinema, speaking out loud if not always clear, and inviting from their audiences an essentially personal response. Are you tuned in to the wave-length; are you with it? These are the relevant questions, as much as the value judgments of a staid critical tradition.

Films of the year: four of the above six (not, as a personal reaction, the Godard or the Colpi); Olmi's affectionate comedy *Il Posto*, also from the London Festival and winner of the Sutherland Trophy, Rivette's spellbinding *Paris Nous Appartient*; from Britain, Tony Richardson's *A Taste of Honey* and Jack Clayton's *The Innocents*; from America, Robert Rossen's *The Hustler*, a remarkable return to form by a director working here with material absolutely right for him; from France again, Astruc's cool *La Proie pour l'Ombre*, Becker's prison study *Le Trou*, and, towering over everything else, the definitive version of *La Règle du Jeu*; from Italy Visconti's *Rocco*, a belated arrival in the commercial cinemas; from Poland another late arrival, Andrzej Munk's brave *Eroica*.

Six of these films are first features by new directors; and the Franco-Italian cinemas, with their ability to unearth and sustain new talent, still lead the way. The absolutely contemporary, 1960's film may be nothing very marvellous in its own right: *The Connection* is boring and fascinating by turns, *A Bout de Souffle* runs out of gas before the end. But because the films are contemporary, talk our own language, are made with total freedom from studio disciplines and restrictions, they make a good deal of routine, competent studio filmmaking look solemn and constricted. The blockbusters continue to pack the cinemas; the posters go up—fourth month, or fourth year—but for the time being most of the creative energy and enthusiasm is elsewhere.

Other new directors: Alexander Singer, of *A Cold Wind in August*, Philippe de Broca, whose two-year-old *Playing at Love* finally caught up with his much more recent and rather too similar *Infidelity*, Bryan Forbes,

who made the transition from screenwriting to directing very smoothly in *Whistle Down the Wind*, Marcel Moussy, whose *Saint Tropez Blues* actually pulled off the kind of irresponsible charm most of his French colleagues work so hard at. And, of course, Marlon Brando, a thundercloud presence looming over *One Eyed Jacks*. Other pleasures: *One Hundred and One Dalmatians*, for Disney animal fanciers; the return of Bob Hope and Lucille Ball as the desperate suburban couple of *The Facts of Life*; Lilli Palmer's sophisticated salvage work in *Montparnasse 19* and *The Pleasure of his Company*.

Among the performers: Anouk Aimée in *Lola*; Annie Girardot in *La Proie pour l'Ombre* and *Rocco*; Paula Prentiss, indomitably coltish in *Where the Boys Are* and about to be labelled a new Shirley MacLaine, as though we had got bored with the old one; Audrey Hepburn and Patricia Neal, vulnerable and armour-plated respectively in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*; John McGiver, the perfect salesman in the same film; Everett Chambers' hard, harried little agent in Cassavetes' *Too Late Blues*; Jean-Paul Belmondo in *A Bout de Souffle*; Murray Melvin and Rita Tushingham discovering domesticity in *A Taste of Honey*. And one reserves a particular affection for Mary Astor's effortless scene-stealing in *Return to Peyton Place*; seldom can the defence of a silly cause, in a sillier film, have found its way into safer hands.

These impressions from a year's filmgoing cover a wide field; no new masterpieces, perhaps, but vitality to spare, and a sense of opportunity and diversity. The problems, particularly in this country, remain substantial; filmmakers in Britain must still look enviously across the Channel at the kind of experiment possible when government aid goes to stimulate innovation and costs are kept down. But the success of Tony Richardson and John Osborne's company, Woodfall, and the range of the ambitious programme they've confidently announced, also shows what can be done.

* * *

Finally, and sadly, some of the people lost to the cinema during the year. Gary Cooper's death reduced by yet another name the dwindling ranks of Hollywood's Grand Army, the stars round whom everyone's image of the American cinema was built. Andrzej Munk's death in a car accident ended a career of great promise. Wajda, the more flamboyant personality, has always been better known as a director; but Munk's quiet, courageous talent was certainly of no less value to the Polish cinema. Edouard Tisse, Eisenstein's collaborator and one of the screen's great cameramen, died in Russia. And in Maya Deren the American cinema lost the pioneer of its *avant garde*: "her perception alone outweighed that of almost any six of her colleagues," Cecile Starr writes, "not to mention her intellect and her fierceness." As last year, we have also to note the retirement of a critic: George Stonier is no longer leading his double life as William Whitebait, after twenty years of weekly columns for the *New Statesman*. Both as a particularly graceful writer, and as a friend of most of the London-based contributors to this magazine, we miss Whitebait even if we can still enjoy Stonier.

OF THE



SEITZMAN

ART HOUSE

AUDIENCE

fantasies of the art-house audience

by PAULINE Kael

FOR SEVERAL DECADES NOW EDUCATED PEOPLE have been condescending toward the children, the shop-girls, all those with "humdrum" or "impoverished" lives—the mass audience—who turned to movies for "ready-made" dreams. The educated might admit that they sometimes went to the movies designed for the infantile mass audience—the number of famous people who relax with detective fiction makes this admission easy—but presumably they were not "taken in", they went to get away from the tensions of their complex lives and work. But of course when they really want to enjoy movies as an art, they go to foreign films, or "adult" or unusual or experimental American films.

I would like to suggest that the educated audience often uses "art" films in much the same self-indulgent way as the mass audience uses Hollywood "product", finding wish-fulfilment in the form of cheap and easy congratulation on their sensitivities and their liberalism. (Obviously any of my generalisations are subject to numerous exceptions and infinite qualifications; let's assume that I know this, and that I use large generalisations in order to be suggestive rather than definitive.)

1

BY THE TIME Alain Resnais' *Hiroshima mon Amour* reached American art-houses, expectations were extraordinarily high. Dwight Macdonald, in *Esquire* had said: "It is the most original, moving, exciting and important movie I've seen in years, somehow managing to combine a love story with propaganda against war and the atomic bomb without either losing its full force." The rest of the press seemed to concur. The *Saturday Review* considered it "a masterpiece". The *New York Herald Tribune* decided that "it establishes beyond any man's cavilling the potentialities of the film as an art"—something one might have thought already established. *Time* decided that the theme was that "Hiroshima, like God, is love. It is the Calvary of the atomic age. It died for man's sins," etc. I met a couple who had seen the film five nights in a row; a University of California professor informed me that if I didn't like *this* one, he would never speak to me again. Dwight Macdonald wrote more and went further: "It is as stylised as *Potemkin* or *Ten Days that Shook the World*, as pure and powerful as cinema . . . It is also a novelistic exploration of memory, a *recherche du temps perdu* comparable to Proust . . . for the first time since Eisenstein—we have a cinematic intelligence so quick, so subtle, so original, so at once passionate and sophisticated that it can be compared with Joyce, with Picasso, with Berg and Bartok and Stravinsky . . . The audience was extraordinarily quiet—no coughing, whispering, rustling of paper; a hypnotic trance . . . It was oddly like a religious service, and if someone had made a wisecrack, it would have seemed not an irritation but a blasphemy."

Surely movies—even the greatest movies—are rarely received in such an atmosphere of incense-burning. *Breathless* and *L'Avventura* were to be either admired or disliked or ignored, but *Hiroshima mon Amour* was described in hushed tones; it was some sort of ineffable deep experience. Why?

The picture opened with those intertwined nude bodies—

this could be symbolic of a true intermingling, but it irresistibly set off some lewd speculations about just *what* was going on. And what was that stuff they were covered with? Beach sand? Gold dust? Ashes? Finally, I accepted it as symbolic bomb-ash, but I wasn't happy with it. (Later I discovered that it was supposed to be "sweat, ashes and dew".) Then the French girl said she had seen everything in Hiroshima, and the Japanese man told her she had seen nothing in Hiroshima. Then they said the same things over again, and again, and perhaps again. And I lost patience. I have never understood why writers assume that repetition creates a lyric mood or underlines meaning with profundity. My reaction is simply, "O.K., I got it the first time, let's get on with it." Now, this is obviously not how we are supposed to react to Marguerite Duras' dialogue, which is clearly intended to be musical and contrapuntal, and I was going to try to get in the right, passive, receptive mood for a ritual experience, when some outright fraud made me sit up and pay attention. The action—or inaction—in bed was intercut with what purported to be documentary shots of the effect of the bomb on Hiroshima. Only I had seen some of the footage before in a Japanese atrocity movie that was about as documentary as *Peyton Place*. This clumsily staged imposture made me suspect that the Japanese man didn't know Hiroshima either, and I began to look askance at the truth he was supposed to represent. Where did he get this metaphysical identity with Hiroshima? As the film went on, and the heroine recounted her first love for a German soldier, how he had been killed on the last day of fighting, how she had been dragged away and her head shaved, how she had gone mad and been hidden away in the cellar by her shamed parents, I began to think less and less of the movie and more about why so many people were bowled over by it.

Was it possibly an elaborate, masochistic fantasy for intellectuals? Surely both sexes could identify with the girl's sexual desperation, her sensitivity and confusion—and had anyone dreamed up worse punishments for sexuality? Only a few years ago it had looked as if James Dean in *East of Eden* and *Rebel Without a Cause* had gone just about as far as anybody could in being misunderstood. But this heroine not only had her head shaved by people who didn't understand her love and need of the German, but she went *crazy* and was locked in a cellar. You can't go much further in being misunderstood. And, at the risk of giving offence, is this not what sends so many people to analysts—the fear that they'll go crazy if they don't get love?

The Japanese, it may be noted, is rather dull and uninteresting: he says no more than an analyst might; he is simply a sounding-board. And if, being Japanese, he is supposed to represent the world's conscience, he brings an unsuitably bland, professionally sympathetic and upper class manner to the function. But everybody who has suffered sexual deprivation—and who hasn't?—can identify with her and perhaps fantasise brutal parents and cellars. Even her insanity can be equated with those rough nights when a love affair fell apart or that nervous exhaustion at the end of the academic year that sends so many to the hospital or the psychiatric clinic.

It seemed to be a woman's picture—in the most derogatory sense of the term. And still she went on talking: her feelings, her doubts, her memories, kept pouring out. It began to seem like *True Confession* at the higher levels of spiritual and sexual communion; and I decided the great lesson for us all was to shut up. This woman (beautifully as Emmanuelle Riva interpreted her) was exposing one of the worst faults of intelligent modern woman: she was talking all her emotions out—as if bed were the place to demonstrate sensibility. It's unfortunate that what people believe to be the most important things about themselves, their innermost truths and secrets—the real you or me—that we dish up when somebody looks sympathetic, is very likely to be the drivelling nonsense that we generally have enough brains to forget about. The real you or me that we conceal because we think people won't accept it is slop—and why *should* anybody want it?

But here was the audience soaking it up—audiences of social workers, scientists, doctors, architects, professors—living and loving and suffering just like the stenographer watching Susan Hayward. Are the experiences involved really so different? Few of us have seen our lovers killed by partisan bullets, but something kills love anyway—something always does—and it's probably highly gratifying for many people to identify with a heroine who isn't responsible: it is the insane world that has punished her for her sexual expression. Emmanuelle Riva's sexual expression is far more forthright than a Hollywood heroine's, which makes it more appealing to an educated audience, and, of course, her character and her manner of indicating her emotional problems have a higher "tone". (It may be relevant to note that the educated audience, which generally ignores Miss Hayward, did turn out for *I Want To Live*, in which the character of Barbara Graham was turned into a sort of modern Tess of the d'Urbervilles—not only innocent of crime but horribly sinned against and *nobler* than anybody else.)

But what does her sad story have to do with Hiroshima and the bomb? Would not some other psycho-sexual story of deprivation (say, *Camille* or *Stella Dallas*) be just as relevant to the horrors of war if it were set in Hiroshima? It would seem so. However, the setting itself explains another aspect of the film's strong appeal, particularly to liberal intellectuals. There is a crucial bit of dialogue: "They make movies to sell soap, why not a movie to sell peace?" I don't know how many movies you have gone to lately that were made to sell soap, but American movies *are* like advertisements, and we can certainly assume that indirectly they sell a way of life that includes soap as well as an infinity of other products. But what makes the dialogue crucial is that the audience for *Hiroshima mon Amour* feels virtuous because they want to buy peace. And the question I want to ask is: who's selling it?

2

RECENTLY, AT A cocktail party of artists and professors, I noticed displayed on a table right next to the pickled Jerusalem artichokes, two French publications—Lo Duca's new volume on *Eroticism in the Cinema* and Kenneth Anger's *Hollywood Babylon*. Both books are like more elegantly laid out issues of *Confidential* and all those semi-nameless magazines which feature hideously outsized mammary glands, only these books are supposed to be chic—the latest intellectual camp. The Lo Duca book features stills from a Kenneth Anger movie in which nude ladies are wrapped in chains. Anger, you may recall, made his reputation with a film called *Fireworks*, in which a roman candle explodes inside a sailor's fly. His own book has a dust jacket photograph of Jayne Mansfield—an aerial view down her dress. The book itself is a recounting of the legends (that is to say the dirty stories, scandals, and gossip) that Anger heard while growing up in Southern California.

What struck me about these books, which function as entertainment to what might be called highbrows, was that their chic seemed to consist largely in a degradation of the female image. The stars and starlets are displayed at their most grotesque, just as they are in the cheapest American publications (in fact the photos are probably derived from those sources). This female image is a parody of woman—lascivious face, wet open mouth, gigantic drooping breasts. She has no character, no individuality: she's blonde or brunette or redhead, as one might consume a martini, an old-fashioned, or a gin and tonic.

Now I am told that even the junior high school boys of America use photographs like these as pin-ups, and that this is their idea of the desirable female. I don't believe it. I would guess that they pretend to this ideal because they're afraid they won't be considered manly and sexy if they admit they find this image disgusting. I don't believe that these photographs are erotic in any ordinary sense. I think that the grotesqueness of this female image is what people enjoy. Here are some possible reasons. First, these spongy, subhuman sex images reduce women to the lowest animal level. And in the modern world, where women are competent, independent, and free and equal, the men have a solid, competitive hostility—they want to see women degraded even lower than they were in the Victorian era. Here is woman reduced to nothing but a blob that will gratify any male impulse. And, of course, a woman who has no interest in life but love presents no challenge to the male ego. Second, there's the old split between sacred and profane love—and many men feel that the more degraded the female, the more potent they would become. Third, there's the vast homosexual audience which enjoys derision of the female. I would guess, and here's a big generalisation, that more homosexuals than heterosexuals love to chortle over the pin-up photos of Anita Ekberg. She's so preposterous—a living

"She is not playing here for effect; she is playing for keeps." Brigitte Bardot in "*La Vérité*".



satire of the female. It's my guess that the audience for nudie-cutie magazines uses them in much the same way the wealthy and educated use expensive French publications on the same theme: they want to laugh at the subjects and/or feel superior to them.

When the parodied female becomes known, becomes a "personality", derision gives way to admiration and sympathy and "understanding". In publications like the British *Sunday Times* you will find discussions with passages like "Marilyn Monroe grew up without affection and at times she was near suicide. When she talks about herself the awareness of her bitter past is never quite absent." *Time* and *Life* present her psychoanalytical comments on herself. And Dwight Macdonald in *Esquire* explains that "the expensive difficulties she makes for her employers are not so much prima donna assertiveness as symptoms of resentment and boredom." Sociologists read Zolotow's book on her character changes, and Cecil Beaton rhapsodises that "she was born the postwar day we had need of her. Certainly she has no knowledge of the past. Like Giraudoux's Ondine, she is only fifteen years old; and she will never die." He's right, at least, about her not having knowledge of the past: she seems to have swallowed all the psychoanalytical clichés about maltreated children, and when she talks about her past—which is the only past she seems to have real awareness of—she simply spews them up. And the educated public loves these burbling bits of Freudian "insight" when they come out of the mouths of "babes". In *The Misfits*, our heroine, with the sure instincts of the faithful dog, and the uncorrupted clarity of the good clean peasant, looks at each character in the film and knows him for what he is. The innocent eye can see the inner man—she's the female of the species of the strong, silent hero, but she's also the traditional whore with the heart of gold. Her performance in *The Misfits* appears uncontrollably nervous, but it's almost as if her confused state were the final proof of her sincerity. The public loves her the more because life seems too much for her.

Brigitte Bardot, the *San Francisco Chronicle* tells us, "hits her stride" in *La Vérité*; or, as the *New York Herald Tribune* says, "She is not playing here for effect; she is playing for keeps." We might translate this to imply that both in and out of the production, Bardot is a prey to her own emotions. Clouzot coyly plays with this confusion by having Bardot, the subject of a book by Simone de Beauvoir, accused in the courtroom of *La Vérité* of having read a book by de Beauvoir.

La Vérité is a tired and trite and mechanical piece of slick movie-making. Conceptually, it's rather like *Of Human Bondage*—seen from Mildred's point of view. Although the title and the film's structure suggest that we are going to see the relativity of truth, the movie seems designed to show us the truth about Bardot, just as *The Misfits* was written around Monroe. (These ladies are then congratulated for their histrionic achievements in playing themselves; certainly they are perfect in the roles—no one else could play them so well—but then, could they play anyone else?) This confusion of art and life which takes the form of sensationalism is becoming very popular in this Freudianised period. It is supposed to be daring and modern to make these messed-up accounts of messed-up lives—though they may seem very much like the old Sunday supplements with their daring exposés. In this new form, however, the appeal is not only to the mass audience but also to the more literate, who are led to believe that they are getting some inside psychological dope.

Apparently these screen incarnations of male fantasies, Monroe (once a calendar girl come to comic strip life, an implausible but delicious affront to respectability) and Bardot (the distillation of all those irresponsible, petulant teenagers who may never know that human experience has depth and

expressiveness and potentialities beyond their immediate range of impulses) are objects of enthusiasm not so much for their (former or present) polymorphous-perverse physical charms and their (former or present) comedy talents, as for their messy, confused public-private lives—the nervous breakdowns, miscarriages, overweight problems, husband troubles, and all those mental and physical ills which now comprise the image of a great star. The new heroine of our films is becoming the wretched star herself. Movies and their makers feed on each other: surely Eddie Fisher will write a movie for and about Elizabeth Taylor. In the pre-Freudian age, the exploitation of personal ailments in films like *The Misfits* and *La Vérité* would have been regarded as disgusting. It is disgusting, and the condescending type of sympathetic "understanding" which is now widely purveyed is an insult to Freud and man. In the frivolous, absurd old days, stars were photographed in their bubble baths: now they bathe in tears of self-pity—while intellectual critics tap their understanding typewriters.

The "mass" audience looks up at the "stars"; the educated audience looks down sympathetically, as if reading a case history. They all stew in their own narcissism. The mass audience is beginning to catch up. On a recent television programme Ed Sullivan clucked sympathetically at Brigitte Bardot and told her how much he sympathised with the hard life of glamour girls like her and Monroe and Taylor, and, final irony, told her how much he admired the way she had "handled herself".

3

THE EDUCATED American is a social worker at heart: he feels especially sympathetic toward these slovenly ladies because their slovenliness marks them as misfits who couldn't function in his orderly world. The same man who is enchanted with



"The Misfits": divorcee (Marilyn Monroe) and estranged husband (Kevin McCarthy) on the courthouse steps.



"Decor is an article of faith." Holly Golightly's apartment (clear colours, freakish furniture) in "Breakfast at Tiffany's".

Monroe in the seduction scene of *Some Like It Hot*—crawling all over Tony Curtis while hanging out of her dress both fore and aft—expects his girl friends or wife to be trim, slender and well-groomed. The decor in the homes and offices of the American professional classes is clean and functional—Scandinavian with a guilty dash of Japanese (as reparation for the bomb, we sit close to the earth). Upon occasion, the American will desert the art-house for an American picture, particularly if it is advertised with the intellectually fashionable decor. For this decor is an article of faith: it is progressive and important; it calls businessmen and artists to conferences at Aspen, where it is linked with discussions of such topics as "Man the Problem Solver." And so American movies now often come, packaged as it were, with several minutes of ingenious, abstract, eye-catching titles. This send-off—the Swiss-graphics look provided by Saul Bass and other designers—has virtually nothing to do with the style or mood of the picture, but it makes the movie look more modern. (How can the picture be dismissed as trash when it looks like your own expensive living-room?) This type of design, using basic colours and almost no soft lines, was, of course, devised so that advertising would be clear and effective with a minimum of cost. In movies, a photographic medium, complexity and variety and shadings of beauty are no more expensive than simplification. But modern graphic design, which has built an aesthetic on advertising economics, has triumphed: new big productions (like *The Misfits*) open with such a proud array of flashy designs that the movie itself comes on rather apologetically.

The advertising campaign for new films often uses a motif that appears again at the opening of the film: presumably, if the ad was good enough to get you there, you'll appreciate having it amplified. Perhaps the next Hollywood "genius" will be the man who can design the whole movie to look like a high-powered ad. At present, the movie that begins when the packaging is out of the way is in a different, and older, style of advertising art. This style was summed up by a member of the audience a few weeks ago when I was looking at a frightfully expensive, elaborately staged movie. The beautiful heroine, in pale blue, was descending an elegant beige staircase, when a voice from the dark piped up—"Modess, because . . ." When the beautiful heroine in pale blue finally got into her creamy white lace and the properly non-denominational clergyman intoned, "Wilt thou, Robert, take this woman . . .", etc., another voice in the theatre groaned, "I wilt."

The social worker-at-heart finds true reassurance when the

modern-designed movie also has modern design built into the theme: a movie like *Twelve Angry Men*. Ask an educated American what he thought of *Twelve Angry Men* and more likely than not he will reply, "That movie made some good points" or "It got some important ideas across." His assumption is that it carried these ideas, which also happen to be his ideas, to the masses. Actually, it didn't: this tense, ingenious juryroom melodrama was a flop with the mass audience, a success only at revivals in art-houses.

The social psychology of *Twelve Angry Men* is perfectly attuned to the educated audience. The hero, Henry Fonda—the one against the eleven—is lean, intelligent, gentle but strong; this liberal, fair-minded architect is *their* hero. And the boy on trial is their dream of a victim: he is of some unspecified minority, he is a slum product who never had a chance, and, to clinch the case, his father didn't love him. It isn't often that professional people can see themselves on the screen as the hero—in this case the Lincolnesque architect of the future—and how they love it! They are so delighted to see a movie that demonstrates a proposition they have already accepted that they cite *Twelve Angry Men* and *The Defiant Ones* as evidence that American movies are really growing up.

It is a depressing fact that Americans tend to confuse morality and art (to the detriment of both), and that, at the most educated levels, morality tends to mean social consciousness. Not implicit social awareness (Antonioni isn't "saying anything", they complain of *L'Avventura*) but explicit, machine-tooled, commercialised social consciousness. "The old payola won't work any more," announces the hero of *The Apartment*, and even people who should know better are happy to receive the message. How reassuring *The Apartment* is, with its cute, soft-hearted Jewish doctor and his cute, soft-hearted, fat, mama-comic Jewish wife—so unworldly and lovable that they take the poor frustrated sap for a satyr (almost as deadly in its "humour" as Rock Hudson being mistaken for a homosexual in *Pillow Talk*). In *The Apartment*, the little people are little dolls; the guys at the top are vicious and corrupt and unfaithful to their wives as well. The moral is, stick at the bottom and you don't have to do the dirty. This is the pre-bomb universe; and its concept of the "dirty" is so old-fashioned and irrelevant, its notions of virtue and of vice so smugly limited, that it's positively cosy to see people for whom deciding to quit a plushy job is a big moral decision. The "social consciousness" of the educated is so unwieldy, so overstuffed, that the mass audience may well catch up before the intellectuals have found any grounds to move on to—though surely many should be happy to vacate the premises of Freud and Marx.

4

THE ART-HOUSE audience is at its dreamiest for Russian films like *Ballad of a Soldier* and *The Cranes Are Flying*. How eager they are to believe the best about the Soviet Union, to believe that love is back, propaganda is out, and it's all right to like Russian movies because the Russians are really nice people, very much like us, only better. These sentiments have been encouraged by the theatres and by the cultural exchange agreement, and at showings of *The Cranes Are Flying* there was a queasy little prefatory note: "At the same time you are watching this Soviet film, Soviet audiences are watching an American motion picture." I was happy for the voice in the theatre which piped up, "But it's 6 a.m. in the Soviet Union."

The Cranes Are Flying and *Ballad of a Soldier* are both good examples of nineteenth century patriotism and nineteenth century family values; neither seems to belong to the Communist period at all—they're reminiscent of American war epics of the silent era. And sophisticated Americans love the simple, dutiful characters that they would laugh at in American movies. It's a long time since audiences at art-houses accepted the poor, ravished unhappy heroine who has to marry the cad who rapes her. They go even farther toward primitivism at *Ballad of a Soldier*: they love the "touching"

and "charming" hero and heroine who express such priggish repugnance at a soldier's unfaithful wife (how would these two react if they caught the wife sleeping with a German, like the heroine of *Hiroshima mon Amour*?). *Ballad of a Soldier* takes us back to the days when love was sweet and innocent, authority was good, only people without principles thought about sex, and it was the highest honour to fight and die for your country. These homely values, set in handsome, well-photographed landscapes, apparently are novel and refreshing—perhaps they're even exotic—to art-house audiences. It's a world that never was, but hopeful people would love to associate it with life in the Soviet Union.

Are these recruiting posters so morally superior to American lingerie ads like *Butterfield 8*? Are they as effective in the USSR as in the outside world? We can see the results of *Butterfield 8*: half the junior high school girls in America are made up to look like Elizabeth Taylor, and at the Academy Award Show it was hard to tell the stars apart—there were so many little tin Lizzies. It's more difficult to gauge the effects of Russia's antique middle-class morality. Perhaps educated Americans love the Russians more than the Russians do. All over America people are suddenly studying Russian; and they sometimes give the impression that the first word they want to learn is "Welcome".

A congressional sub-committee headed by Kathryn Granahan, a Democrat from Pennsylvania, is exploring the possibility that the influx of foreign films, most especially the French film *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, may be a Communist plot to undermine American moral structure—that is to say that Americans are being offered a preoccupation with sex so that they will become degenerate, corrupt, too weak to combat the Communist threat. Mrs. Granahan has stated that the social, cultural and moral standards of France are among the greatest impediments to a strong NATO stand against international Communism.

In other words, she takes the position that a strong state, a state capable of defending itself, must be a Puritan state, and that individual freedom and the loosening of sexual standards threaten the state. This is, of course, the present Communist position: even American jazz is regarded as a threat. Nothing could be *cleaner*—in nineteenth century terms—than Russian movies. Observers at the Moscow Film Festival reported that the Russians were quite upset after the showing of *The Trials of Oscar Wilde*: they had been under the impression that Wilde was imprisoned for his revolutionary politics—for socialism, not for sodomy. Russians have been protected from just such information, discussion and art as Mrs. Granahan would protect us from. Apart from what appears to be a wholly unfounded notion that the Russians are trying to poison us via French sexual standards, there is an interesting



issue here. For absurd as the Granahan position seems to be, I have heard a variant of it from many people who would scoff at the way she puts it.

Everywhere in the United States enthusiasts for *La Dolce Vita* explain that it's a great lesson to us—that Rome fell because of sexual promiscuity and high living, and we will too—that the Communists are going to win because of our moral laxity, our decay. It's as if poor old Gibbon had laboured in vain, and the churches' attitudes have triumphed. Even those who no longer believe in God seem to accept the idea that European and American habits and values are loose and sinful and will bring destruction down upon us.

May I suggest that this is just as nonsensical as the Granahan line? If all Europeans and all Americans suddenly became heterosexual and monogamous—if everyone took the pledge and there were no more drinking, if all night-clubs were closed, and if the rich turned their wealth over to the poor—I cannot see that our *power* position in this nuclear age would in any way be affected. And it's astonishing that sensible people can get so sentimental about Russian movies with their Puritan standards, the bourgeois morality that developed out of the rising salaried classes and the Stalinist drive to stamp out individual freedom. Queen Victoria squats on the Kremlin; and Americans who fought to rid themselves of all that repressive Victorianism now beat their breasts and cry, look how *good* they are, look how *terrible* we are—why, we don't *deserve* to win. Has Puritanism so infected our thinking that we believe a nuclear war would be won by the pure in heart?

Above: American liberalism. Tony Curtis and Sidney Poitier in Kramer's "The Defiant Ones".

Right: Return from the war in the Soviet "Story of the Turbulent Years".



TOP/TEN

THE TOP TEN

1. Citizen Kane (Welles, 1941)
2. L'Avventura (Antonioni, 1960)
3. La Règle du Jeu (Renoir, 1939)
4. Greed (von Stroheim, 1924)
5. Ugetsu Monogatari (Mizoguchi, 1953)
6. Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein, 1925)
7. Bicycle Thieves (De Sica, 1949)
8. Ivan the Terrible (Eisenstein, 1943-46)
9. La Terra Trema (Visconti, 1948)
10. L'Atalante (Vigo, 1933)

RUNNERS-UP

1. Hiroshima, mon Amour (Resnais, 1959)
2. Pather Panchali (Ray, 1955)
3. Zéro de Conduite (Vigo, 1933)
4. City Lights (Chaplin, 1930)
5. The Childhood of Maxim Gorki (Donskoi, 1938)
6. The Gold Rush (Chaplin, 1925)
7. Sunrise (Murnau, 1927)
8. Earth (Dovzhenko, 1929)
9. Monsieur Verdoux (Chaplin, 1947)
10. The General (Keaton, 1927)
11. La Grande Illusion (Renoir, 1937)
12. Ikiru (Kurosawa, 1952)
13. Nazarin (Buñuel, 1958)
14. October (Eisenstein, 1928)
15. Umberto D (De Sica, 1951)
16. L'Année Dernière à Marienbad (Resnais, 1961)
17. Intolerance (Griffith, 1916)
18. Limelight (Chaplin, 1952)
19. Nuit et Brouillard (Resnais, 1955)
20. The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer, 1928)
21. Pickpocket (Bresson, 1959)
22. Tokyo Story (Ozu, 1953)
23. Wild Strawberries (Bergman, 1957)

VOTING BY DIRECTORS

1. Sergei Eisenstein
2. Charles Chaplin
3. Jean Renoir
4. Orson Welles
5. Michelangelo Antonioni
6. Vittorio De Sica
7. Alain Resnais
8. Jean Vigo
9. Kenji Mizoguchi
10. Erich von Stroheim
11. Luis Buñuel
12. Luchino Visconti

THE TOP TEN, 1952

1. Bicycle Thieves (De Sica, 1949)
2. City Lights (Chaplin, 1930)
3. The Gold Rush (Chaplin, 1925)
4. Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein, 1925)
5. Louisiana Story (Flaherty, 1947)
6. Intolerance (Griffith, 1916)
7. Greed (von Stroheim, 1924)
8. Le Jour se Lève (Carné, 1939)
9. The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer, 1928)
10. Brief Encounter (Lean, 1945)
11. Le Million (Clair, 1930)
12. La Règle du Jeu (Renoir, 1939)

ALMOST TEN YEARS AGO a referendum was organised from Brussels in which film directors were asked to nominate the ten best films in cinema history. SIGHT AND SOUND, following in Brussels' wake, extended the same invitation to critics. Both lists were duly published (they both agreed, incidentally, on the four top choices, though not in the same order). Since then, the game has been played again, during the Brussels Exhibition a few years ago. And now we have asked the critics to have another go, not because we think—or imagine they think—that anyone's individual list, or the consensus of opinion reached by totting up the various choices, involves any definitive judgment, but precisely because no judgments can be definitive. One doesn't arrive at an objective review of the best films ever made (how could one?) but at an indication of how opinion is moving and what the cinema looks like in the perspective of 1962.

The cinema has been given a shake-up in the last few years: the New Wave in France; the advances in Italy; the West's discovery of the Oriental cinemas; the new cinemas of Eastern Europe and Latin America, and so on. Every six months a new movement or school is discovered somewhere, and critical opinion fluctuates like a barometer in a storm. We thought it would be interesting to see whether taste had significantly changed in the last ten years, how far the 'new cinema' might be shouldering out the established classics, and how much the rise of a post-war generation of critics, people to whom the silent cinema has none of the pull it still exerts on their elders, might have shifted the balance.

The letter we sent out to just over a hundred critics, in this country and overseas, made only one stipulation. We asked people to send us really personal selections, not to let themselves be influenced by academic orthodoxy into nominating films they might not have seen for twenty or thirty years and remembered as misty landmarks. We've received 70 answers, the majority from this country, the United States and France, but also from Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Poland and the Soviet Union. We'd like to thank everyone who responded, and also to apologise to those whose individual lists we have been unable to print because of pressure on space. We're sorry, too, that there isn't room to print more of the comments we've received. From Poland, a claim to a record number of titles seen—13,000; a number of agonised *cris de coeur*, from critics who could have given us a hundred titles with ease but jibbed desperately at ten; explanations of choices and forecasts of winners. "Every film critic's favourite parlour game," said one of our contributors; "yes, it is difficult and impossible but we will try again," said another. We've tried, as on the previous occasion, to print individual lists which cover the widest range of titles and cross-section of opinion; and we've limited our invitation to working critics, with the few exceptions (Karel Reisz here, Curtis Harrington in the U.S.A.) of critics who have become film-makers since they took part in the same feature ten years ago.

* * *

What has changed in ten years? Of the twelve 'best' titles in 1952 (three dead-heating for tenth place), four remain in our present list. *La Règle du Jeu* and *Greed* have gained ground (tenth place to third and seventh to fourth) and *Bicycle Thieves* and *Potemkin* have lost a little (first place to sixth and fourth to sixth). *Bicycle Thieves* was then a runaway winner; this time *L'Avventura*, *Citizen Kane* and *La Règle du Jeu* have been neck and neck at all stages in the voting—one new film, one which rather surprisingly failed to make

the top ten last time, and one whose recent revival, in the complete version, has added to its reputation. There were six silent films in the 1952 list against two this time—which was predictable. But the new list contains only one really recent picture, as with *Bicycle Thieves* on the last occasion.

Other points worth noting: the high place of *Ugetsu Monogatari*, never yet shown commercially in this country; the fact that the two Vigo features have gained so much in the voting; the startlingly few votes received by some films from the 1952 list—*Louisiana Story* (two), *Le Million* (three), *Le Jour se Lève* (one). Flaherty, Clair and Carné are not at the moment fashionable names; and Bergman, the most widely trumpeted film-maker of the last few years, is far down the list.

One giant has disappeared from the top ten: Chaplin. But we thought it would be interesting to supplement the list by totalling up votes by directors as well as by film titles. Here Chaplin remains close to the top, though, as with any film-maker who is remembered for the whole body of his work rather than for one masterpiece, the votes are split among a number of titles. Eisenstein, Chaplin, Renoir as the giants; Welles, Antonioni, Vigo as the experimentalists: this is how it looks in the perspective of 1962.



A SELECTION OF LISTS

HENRI AGEL (France)

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Sunrise | 7. Bicycle Thieves |
| 2. Broken Blossoms (Griffith) | 8. Madame de ... (Ophüls) |
| 3. City Lights | 9. The Golden Coach (Renoir) |
| 4. Greed | 10. Voyage en Italie (Rossellini) |
| 5. L'Atalante | |
| 6. The Childhood of Maxim Gorki | |

EDGAR ANSTEY (Great Britain)

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Bicycle Thieves | 7. The Cranes are Flying (Kalatozov) |
| 2. Wild Strawberries | 8. Les Enfants du Paradis (Carné) |
| 3. Kameradschaft (Pabst) | 9. The Grapes of Wrath (Ford) |
| 4. La Strada (Fellini) | 10. Le Jour se Lève (Carné) |
| 5. Battleship Potemkin | |
| 6. Earth | |

GUIDO ARISTARCO (Italy)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Chapaev (Vasiliev) | 6. Ivan the Terrible |
| 2. Monsieur Verdoux | 7. La Terra Trema |
| 3. Limelight | 8. Earth |
| 4. The Passion of Joan of Arc | 9. Mother (Pudovkin) |
| 5. Battleship Potemkin | 10. Paisa (Rossellini) |

GIDEON BACHMANN (U.S.A.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. L'Avventura | 6. Miss Julie (Sjöberg) |
| 2. Ugetsu Monogatari | 7. The Gold Rush |
| 3. Sawdust and Tinsel (Bergman) | 8. Strike (Eisenstein) |
| 4. Chronique d'un Été (Rouch) | 9. La Règle du Jeu (Ichikawa) |
| 5. Citizen Kane | 10. Fires on the Plain (Ichikawa) |

PETER BAKER (Great Britain)

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Strike | 7. Citizen Kane |
| 2. The Gold Rush | 8. The Italian Straw Hat (Clair) |
| 3. Intolerance | 9. Kanal (Wajda) |
| 4. Greed | 10. L'Année Dernière à Marienbad |
| 5. Bicycle Thieves | |
| 6. La Grande Illusion | |

JOSH BILLINGS (Great Britain)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. All Quiet on the Western Front (Milestone) | 6. Saturday Night and Sunday Morning (Reisz) |
| 2. Moulin Rouge (Huston) | 7. Ninotchka (Lubitsch) |
| 3. Richard III (Olivier) | 8. The Third Man (Reed) |
| 4. Shane (Stevens) | 9. The Kid (Chaplin) |
| 5. Mutiny on the Bounty (Frank Lloyd) | 10. Ben-Hur (Wyler) |

"... Although I see all foreign films I haven't included one because I flatly refuse to believe a person can fairly judge a "talkie" spoken in a language that he cannot fully understand... But the critics—I'm a reviewer, which is a very different thing—are bound eagerly to step in where I fear to tread, so I'll hazard a guess at the result of the 1961 poll. The winner? *Hiroshima, mon Amour*."

LEON BUKOWIECKI (Poland)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Ugetsu Monogatari | 6. The Best Years of our Lives (Wyler) |
| 2. The End of St. Petersburg (Pudovkin) | 7. Our Hospitality (Keaton) |
| 3. Citizen Kane | 8. Les Enfants du Paradis |
| 4. Bicycle Thieves | 9. Battleship Potemkin |
| 5. Greed | 10. Le Testament d'Orphée (Cocteau) |

"... In my personal opinion the best known best pictures aren't, and many others are..."

"La Règle du Jeu".



"Citizen Kane".

GIULIO CESARE CASTELLO (Italy)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Wedding March (Stroheim) | 5. Païsa (Rossellini) |
| 2. La Grande Illusion | 6. Le Silence est d'Or (Clair) |
| 3. Alexander Nevsky (Eisenstein) | 7. La Terra Trema |
| 4. Day of Wrath (Dreyer) | 8. Limelight |
| | 9. Hiroshima, mon Amour |
| | 10. La Dolce Vita (Fellini) |

"I have selected not only ten single pictures, but also their directors; so when I say Nevsky I mean also *Potemkin*; when I say *Day of Wrath* I mean also *The Passion of Joan of Arc*..."

PAUL DEHN (Great Britain)

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Metropolis (Lang) | 7. Umberto D |
| 2. City Lights | 8. Nuit et Brouillard |
| 3. Citizen Kane | 9. Les Quatre Cents Coups (Truffaut) |
| 4. Henry V (Olivier) | 10. A Taste of Honey (Richardson) |
| 5. Orphée (Cocteau) | |
| 6. Wild Strawberries | |

"The last-named is, of course, still so close that I can only gamble instinctively on its durability."

JEAN DOUCHET (France)

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. The Empress Yang Kwei Fei (Mizoguchi) | 6. The Naked and the Dead (Walsh) |
| 2. The Tiger of Eschnapur (Lang) | 7. Vertigo (Hitchcock) |
| 3. Tabu (Flaherty) | 8. The General |
| 4. Exodus (Preminger) | 9. Bigger than Life (Nicholas Ray) |
| 5. Rio Bravo (Hawks) | 10. A Star is Born (Cukor) |

"... J'ai cédé, en définitive, à une position esthétique générale qui m'a fait sacrifier Losey, Chaplin, Donskoi, Rossellini, Renoir, Minnelli, etc."

PETER JOHN DYER (Great Britain)

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Earth | 6. Tokyo Story |
| 2. L'Atalante | 7. Tol'able David (King) |
| 3. Ugetsu Monogatari | 8. Signora senza Camelie (Antonioni) |
| 4. M (Lang) | 9. Vampyr (Dreyer) |
| 5. Wagonmaster (Ford) | 10. A Generation (Wajda) |

LOTTE EISNER (France)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. The Idiot (Kurosawa) | 6. Fires on the Plain |
| 2. Ugetsu Monogatari | 7. Greed |
| 3. Nazarin | 8. Sunrise |
| 4. Ivan the Terrible (Colour Sequence, Part 2) | 9. Partie de Campagne (Renoir) |
| 5. Monsieur Verdoux | 10. Zéro de Conduite |

"I do not believe in your formula of the ten best films—the ones I give you here are the ones I can see over and over again..."

JOHN GILLETT (Great Britain)

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. The Devil is a Woman (Sternberg) | 6. Pather Panchali |
| 2. Earth | 7. Que Viva Mexico! (Eisenstein) |
| 3. Listen to Britain (Jennings) | 8. La Règle du Jeu |
| 4. Nazarin | 9. Sansho Dayu (Mizoguchi) |
| 5. Our Hospitality (Alphabetical order) | 10. Tokyo Story |

CURTIS HARRINGTON (U.S.A.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. Greed | 6. Les Dames du Bois de Boulogne (Bresson) |
| 2. Zéro de Conduite | 7. Rashomon (Kurosawa) |
| 3. La Règle du Jeu | 8. I Vitelloni (Fellini) |
| 4. The Devil is a Woman | 9. Citizen Kane |
| 5. Dura Lex (Kuleshov) | 10. L'Avventura |

DEREK HILL (Great Britain)

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Ikiru | 9. Fires Were Started (Jennings) |
| 2. The Apu Trilogy | 10. Hotel des Invalides (Franju) |
| 5. The Gorki Trilogy | O Dreamland (Anderson) |
| 8. L'Atalante | |

MARGARET HINXMAN (Great Britain)

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Bicycle Thieves | 6. Dead End (Wyler) |
| 2. Citizen Kane | 7. All Quiet on the Western Front |
| 3. Letter from an Unknown Woman (Ophuls) | 8. The Italian Straw Hat |
| 4. 42nd Street (Lloyd Bacon) | 9. Monsieur Verdoux |
| 5. The Set Up (Robert Wise) | 10. La Grande Illusion |

PENELOPE HOUSTON (Great Britain)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. L'Année Dernière à Marienbad | 6. The Maltese Falcon (Huston) |
| 2. L'Atalante | 7. October |
| 3. L'Avventura | 8. La Règle du Jeu |
| 4. Citizen Kane | 9. La Terra Trema |
| 5. The General (Alphabetical order) | 10. Ugetsu Monogatari |

ARTHUR KNIGHT (U.S.A.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Bicycle Thieves | 6. The Last Laugh (Murnau) |
| 2. Citizen Kane | 7. Moana (Flaherty) |
| 3. City Lights | 8. The Apu Trilogy |
| 4. Hiroshima, mon Amour | 9. Battleship Potemkin |
| 5. Ikiru | 10. La Strada |

ANDRE S. LABARTHE (France)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Pickpocket | 6. Anatomy of a Murder (Preminger) |
| 2. The Night of the Hunter (Laughton) | 7. Rio Bravo |
| 3. L'Age d'Or (Buñuel) | 8. Bébé mange sa Soupe (Lumière) |
| 4. Freaks (T. Browning) | 9. Shin Heike Monogatari (Mizoguchi) |
| 5. La Pyramide Humaine (Rouch) | 10. Les Vampires (Feuillade) |

No special order. "N.B. J'ai volontairement passé sous silence les titres qui viendront sous la plume de tout un chacun (Griffith, Stroheim, Murnau, Dreyer, Renoir, Rossellini, Hitchcock, Welles, Chaplin et quelques autres) préférant citer des films moins susceptibles de l'être... Il est évident que dans huit jours cette liste serait fort différente de ce qu'elle est aujourd'hui. Heureusement."

GAVIN LAMBERT (Great Britain/U.S.A.)

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. L'Age d'Or | 6. Ivan the Terrible |
| 2. El (Buñuel) | 7. Modern Times (Chaplin) |
| 3. Nazarin | 8. Moana |
| 4. Zéro de Conduite | 9. Love of Jeanne Ney (Pabst) |
| 5. Never Give a Sucker an Even Break (Edward Cline) | 10. Gone With the Wind (Fleming) |

"The task becomes rigorously unacademic for an ex-critic!"

DWIGHT MACDONALD (U.S.A.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Birth of a Nation (Griffith) | 6. La Grande Illusion |
| 2. Intolerance | 7. Citizen Kane |
| 3. October | 8. Les Enfants du Paradis |
| 4. Sherlock, Jr. (Keaton) | 9. Hiroshima, mon Amour |
| 5. The Gorki Trilogy | 10. L'Avventura |

"What no Chaplin, no Stroheim, no Dovzhenko, no Pudovkin, no Clair, no Pabst, no Murnau, no De Sica, no Rossellini, no Visconti, no Fellini, no Ford, no Wellman, no Flaherty? Well, it's *your* idea."

AITO MAKINEN (Finland)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Ugetsu Monogatari | 6. The Magnificent Ambersons (Welles) |
| 2. Pather Panchali | 7. Wagonmaster |
| 3. La Terra Trema | 8. Nazarin |
| 4. Zéro de Conduite | 9. Pickpocket |
| 5. Nanook of the North (Flaherty) | 10. L'Avventura |

ROGER MANVELL (Great Britain)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. L'Avventura | 6. Battleship Potemkin |
| 2. Saturday Night and Sunday Morning | 7. Greed |
| 3. Louisiana Story (Flaherty) | 8. The Gold Rush |
| 4. Brief Encounter (Lean) | 9. Bicycle Thieves |
| 5. Intolerance | 10. On the Town (Kelly/Donen) |

"For the first four titles I take history backwards, in other words select from among the films I have found most impressive or exciting or moving or influential in the search for new kinds of presentation or in the fulfilment of the older-established styles. For the next four I go back to the beginning and take from the silent period some of the films that still seem to me to matter most, even though they are by now ancient history, the great 'conventionals' which once broke convention. In between these groups lies the whole historical development of the sound film . . ."

LOUIS MARCORELLES (France)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Poem of the Sea (Dovzhenko/Solntseva) | 6. It Happened One Night (Capra) |
| 2. Une Femme est une Femme (Godard) | 7. Mr. Smith goes to Washington (Capra) |
| 3. Ivan the Terrible | 8. Stella Dallas (King Vidor) |
| 4. Greed | 9. Limelight |
| 5. The Passion of Joan of Arc | 10. We Are the Lambeth Boys (Reisz) |

JONAS MEKAS (U.S.A.)

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Battleship Potemkin | 6. Ivan the Terrible |
| 2. Citizen Kane | 7. Lola Montès (Ophüls) |
| 3. The Gold Rush | 8. Nanook of the North |
| 4. Greed | 9. Le Sang d'un Poète (Cocteau) |
| 5. Intolerance | 10. Zéro de Conduite |

Alphabetical order.

IB MONTY (Denmark)

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. Shoulder Arms (Chaplin) | 6. The Grapes of Wrath |
| 2. Greed | 7. Listen to Britain |
| 3. The Navigator (Keaton/Donald Crisp) | 8. On the Town |
| 4. Zéro de Conduite | 9. Ugetsu Monogatari |
| 5. Partie de Campagne | 10. Nazarin |

"... Of course it is impossible to make a beauty contest concerning works of art, but nevertheless: here is my personal choice, in chronological order. . ."

GENE MOSKOWITZ (U.S.A.)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. The Life of O-Haru (Mizoguchi) | 5. Nazarin |
| 2. Rocco and his Brothers (Visconti) | 6. The Quiet Man (Ford) |
| 3. The World of Apu (Ray) | 7. Limelight |
| 4. L'Avventura | 8. Ivan the Terrible |
| | 9. Greed |
| | 10. Earth |



"L'Atalante".

LUC MOULLET (France)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Voyage en Italie | 7. The Thing from another World (Nyby/Hawks) |
| 2. Sunrise | 8. The Merry Widow (Stroheim) |
| 3. One Exciting Night (Griffith) | 9. Charlotte et son Jules (Godard) |
| 4. La Règle du Jeu | 10. Pickpocket |
| 5. Ugetsu Monogatari | |
| 6. Rebel Without a Cause (Ray) | |

ENNO PATALAS (East Germany)

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Chaplin's Mutual Films | 7. Greed |
| 2. La Terra Trema | 8. Les Vacances de M. Hulot (Tati) |
| 3. La Règle du Jeu | 9. Fires Were Started |
| 4. Citizen Kane | 10. Les Astronautes (Borowczyk) |
| 5. L'Avventura | |
| 6. Ivan the Terrible | |

DILYS POWELL (Great Britain)

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. City Lights | 6. On the Town |
| 2. The General | 7. Partie de Campagne |
| 3. The Italian Straw Hat | 8. The Childhood of Maxim Gorki |
| 4. Monsieur Verdoux | 9. A Time out of War (Sanders Bros.) |
| 5. Hail the Conquering Hero (Preston Sturges) | 10. L'Avventura |

"Last week I might have voted for *Hiroshima, mon Amour* and *Umberto D*, next week I may want *Rocco* (which everybody is so busy explaining away) and all his cousins. Today I feel that fifty per cent at least of the durable films are comedies."

DEREK PROUSE (Great Britain)

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. L'Age d'Or | 6. Citizen Kane |
| 2. L'Atalante | 7. La Terra Trema |
| 3. Mutter Krausen's Fahrt ins Glück (Piel Jutzi) | 8. Rashomon |
| 4. The Childhood of Gorki | 9. Tokyo Story |
| 5. October | 10. L'Année Dernière à Marienbad |

JEAN QUEVAL (France)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. The Gold Rush | 6. Neighbours (McLaren) |
| 2. Que Viva Mexico! | 7. Nuit et Brouillard |
| 3. The Gorki Trilogy | 8. La Notte (Antonioni) |
| 4. Sous les Toits de Paris (Clair) | 9. A Star is Born |
| 5. Casque d'Or (Becker) | 10. O Dreamland |

"... Above list ludicrous. Made up partly through elimination of the best. Couldn't decide which best work by Vigo, Prevert-Carné, Renoir, Flaherty, Visconti, Bergman, Buñuel, Stroheim. So left them out . . . swear not to play your game ten years hence."

KAREL REISZ (Great Britain)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. L'Atalante | 7. Wagonmaster |
| 2. City Lights | 8. L'Avventura |
| 3. Earth | 9. Umberto D |
| 4. Listen to Britain | 10. Due Soldi di Speranza (Castellani) |
| 5. Los Olvidados (Buñuel) | La Règle du Jeu |
| 6. Palm Beach Story (Sturges) | |

JACQUES RIVETTE (France)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. The Life of O-Haru | 6. Ivan the Terrible |
| 2. Germany Year Zero (Rossellini) | 7. L'Atalante |
| 3. True Heart Susie (Griffith) | 8. Day of Wrath |
| 4. Sunrise | 9. Monsieur Verdoux |
| 5. The River (Renoir) | 10. Confidential Report (Welles) |

DAVID ROBINSON (Great Britain)

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Viridiana (Buñuel) | 6. Ivan the Terrible |
| 2. La Terra Trema | 7. Tokyo Story |
| 3. City Lights | 8. Wedding March |
| 4. The Apu Trilogy | 9. Les Quatre Cents Coups |
| 5. The Gorki Trilogy | 10. Anthology of the works of W. C. Fields |

Supporting programme:
Le Mélomane (Méliès)

"I could not attempt or presume to choose the ten best; all I can do is to name the films which I would choose to console a solitary exile. Can I cheat by choosing one, a trilogy, two, an incomplete trilogy, and three, a non-existent anthology?"

ERIC ROHMER (France)

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. True Heart Susie | 6. Voyage en Italie |
| 2. The General | 7. Red River (Hawks) |
| 3. Sunrise | 8. Vertigo |
| 4. La Règle du Jeu | 9. Pickpocket |
| 5. Ivan the Terrible | 10. La Pyramide Humaine |

Chronological order. "Ces films sont ceux qui, à mes yeux, si le cinéma venait à disparaître, donneraient la plus juste idée de ses meilleurs réussites, au sein de ses plus hautes ambitions."

RICHARD ROUD (U.S.A./Great Britain)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. L'Année Dernière à Marienbad | 5. Les Dames du Bois de Boulogne |
| 2. L'Atalante | 6. Hiroshima, mon Amour |
| 3. Citizen Kane | 7. La Notte |
| 4. Cronaca di un Amore (Antonioni) | 8. Pickpocket |
| | 9. La Règle du Jeu |
| | 10. Tokyo Story |

Alphabetical order.

"Ugetsu Monogatari".

GEORGES SADOUL (France)

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Battleship Potemkin | 6. Le Million (Clair) |
| 2. Modern Times | 7. Greed |
| 3. Toni (Renoir) | 8. Bicycle Thieves |
| 4. Mother | 9. Ugetsu Monogatari |
| 5. Earth | 10. Hiroshima, mon Amour |

JACQUES SICLIER (France)

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Intolerance | 6. Ivan the Terrible |
| 2. Nosferatu (Murnau) | 7. Senso (Visconti) |
| 3. The Gold Rush | 8. Voyage en Italie |
| 4. La Règle du Jeu | 9. Vertigo |
| 5. Citizen Kane | 10. Pickpocket |

Chronological order.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR (Great Britain)

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Journal d'un Curé de Campagne (Bresson) | 6. The Spiral Staircase (Siodmak) |
| 2. Orphée | 7. The General |
| 3. The Magnificent Ambersons | 8. Kind Hearts and Coronets (Hamer) |
| 4. Singin' in the Rain (Kelly/Donen) | 9. Senso |
| 5. Triumph of the Will (Riefenstahl) | 10. Sunrise |

ROBERT VAS (Hungary/Great Britain)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Ashes and Diamonds (Wajda) | 6. Journal d'un Curé de Campagne |
| 2. A Diary for Timothy (Jennings) | 7. Los Olvidados |
| 3. The Grapes of Wrath | 8. Our Hospitality |
| 4. The Great Citizen (Ermler) | 9. La Règle du Jeu |
| 5. Ikiru | 10. Umberto D |

Alphabetical order.

ILYA VEISFELD (U.S.S.R.)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Battleship Potemkin | 7. Ballad of a Soldier (Chukhrai) |
| 2. The Gold Rush | 8. Mother Joan of the Angels (Kawalerowicz) |
| 3. Earth | 9. The Naked Island (Kaneto Shindo) |
| 4. La Grande Illusion | 10. Tutti a Casa (Comencini) |
| 5. Bicycle Thieves | |
| 6. The Red Balloon (Lamorisse) | |

ALEXANDER WALKER (Great Britain)

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Viridiana | 7. Hiroshima, mon Amour |
| 2. Citizen Kane | 8. La Terra Trema |
| 3. Wild Strawberries | 9. Some Like it Hot (Wilder) |
| 4. L'Avventura | 10. A Bout de Souffle (Godard) |
| 5. La Règle du Jeu | |
| 6. The Gold Rush | |

"... My guess is that *La Règle du Jeu* will occupy the same position in your list as *Bicycle Thieves* did last time."

ARCHER WINSTEN (U.S.A.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Farrebique (Rouquier) | 6. Henry V |
| 2. The Stars Look Down (Reed) | 7. The Asphalt Jungle (Huston) |
| 3. Our Town (Sam Wood) | 8. The Apu Trilogy |
| 4. Bicycle Thieves | 9. Hiroshima, mon Amour |
| 5. Day of Wrath | 10. L'Avventura |

COLIN YOUNG (U.S.A.)

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Citizen Kane | 6. L'Avventura |
| 2. The Gold Rush | 7. Pather Panchali |
| 3. Man of Aran (Flaherty) | 8. Rashomon |
| 4. October | 9. The Seventh Seal (Bergman) |
| 5. Song of Ceylon (Wright) | 10. Umberto D |



NEW YORK Letter

CECILE
STARR

JONAS MEKAS' *Guns of the Trees* was premièred early in December at New York's Cinema 16. In attempting to present pressing problems of our times, the film states and restates a theme of discontent in a discouraged society. A carefree Negro couple (Ben Carruthers, of *Shadows*, and Argus Speare Juilliard) amble along and dance around, loving what there is to love of life and each other, scorning or ignoring the rest. Their white counterparts (Frances Stillman and Adolfas Mekas) weigh and measure life's burdens with monologues, dialogues, stares, shouts, frowns, glances, strolls and other premeditated poses. An ineffectual cleric meditates, walks, asks and answers questions, ineffectively. Trees, fields, apartments, windows, trains, bridges, city streets, stores, protest meetings, provide backgrounds and foregrounds in which the characters meet, eat and greet. A brightly illuminated screen (clear film) provides opening, closing and transition moments for the film, replacing conventional fades and dissolves. The denial of continuity and convention is further pursued in a frequent changing of location. Time is neither continuous nor disconnected; repetitions evoke neither a forward nor a backward movement, nor sideways nor up-and-down. Time is one of the missing elements in *Guns of the Trees*. Place is everything and everywhere.

If only one could feel, as with Dovzhenko's *Zvenigora* (which recently played for the first time in New York), that it was the wild awakening of a mad, mysterious talent unable even to imagine its own resources. If only *Guns of the Trees* were based on an old Lithuanian legend, or were a veritable lexicon of creative techniques. But it is not mysterious, it is demanding. It is disturbed rather than distorted; angry rather than alarmed. It is a compilation rather than a distillation of ideas about life, love, death and film. Worse, it is a work which lacks cadence. It is not enough that the film cries out against decadence, not enough that it asks us to look and think. It should also provoke the sound, the feel, the touch and taste of living. It does not, except in the virtuoso moments in which Argus and occasionally Ben horse around just for the fun of it.

The film is weakest in its sounds. This cannot be excused on the grounds of poor equipment and inadequate funds, for what there is of sound, badly recorded and poorly dubbed as much of it is, is unpardonably dull—a hodgepodge of questions, comments, spontaneous nothings, self-consciously intoned. Allen Ginsberg's poetry interludes provide ample contrast with an occasional witty or precise remark. Lucia Dlugoszewski's non-melodic score, and the interspersed folk tune or popular song, are additional refreshment to an otherwise

stagnant sound track. If we needed evidence, *Guns of the Trees* more than provides it, that a film which intends to say something must first have someone who can say it—whether with craft and zip (as Ginsberg's few lines here), or style and intricacy (as Marguerite Duras' *Hiroshima mon Amour*), or literary derivation (as Antonioni's script for his *L'Avventura*). If words are to be written or spoken or improvised, this can be done effectively only by people who have special talents for writing, speaking or improvising. It is also a talent to know where one's talent ends.

Jonas Mekas did not know when he made *Guns of the Trees*, but let us hope that he will find out easily and soon. For although he has not created an exciting film—in some ways and for most people it is more nearly unbearable—still it is by no means lacking in accomplishment. If for no other reason, the film is memorable for its striking presentation of the brilliantly comic and perfectly beautiful Miss Juilliard. And there are other virtues. The photography, apparently the work of several cameramen, is almost unfailingly interesting. The fact that Mekas, who edits the magazine *Film Culture*, made the film against all odds—without money, experience, equipment or organisation, with fear and trembling and admirably decisive determination—is only to the good. If, for example, we compare this film to Stanley Kubrick's first picture *Fear and Desire*, which was made seven or eight years ago in comparable circumstances, we find that the two films are equally naïve, it is true, yet Mekas at his worst merely fails to communicate, while Kubrick shames himself and his audience; and Mekas, at his best, brings moments of make-believe reality to life, while Kubrick is dealing with phoney representations of phoney ideas. Kubrick's defects are in imitation of other people's defects; Mekas' are his own. Kubrick knew where he was going, and Mekas clearly does not. This is what makes the Mekas film the more important of the two. We can only hope that he will have the critical discipline to see this film, eventually if not now, as others see it. If so, there is no imagining what he might accomplish in his next film.



"Guns of the Trees": Ben Carruthers and Argus Speare Juilliard.

IN THE PICTURE

Ermanno Olmi in London

PENELOPE HOUSTON writes: Ermanno Olmi, director of *Il Posto*, winner of the 1961 Sutherland Trophy, made his first visit to England during the London Festival to collect his award. *Il Posto* is his first story feature, although he has already made over twenty industrial documentaries, including one (*Il Tempo si è Fermato*) of feature length. This documentary experience might easily be deduced from his film's scrupulous observation; but the particular quality of innocence without ignorance, of assimilated experience, in *Il Posto* is also partly explained by his background. The film, he says, has its autobiographical elements.

Olmi is only thirty, and still pretty much of a stranger even to the Italian film world. He's met Fellini and Rossellini, whose work he particularly admires, but only since *Il Posto's* success; and he has not much time for filmgoing. He has been employed by the Edison Company of Milan, first in their offices, then as a film-maker, and his documentaries have taken him up into the Alps, filming the laying of cables and the men at work on hydro-electric projects. The office building in *Il Posto* is that of the Edison Company; the entirely non-professional cast is largely made up of Edison employees. Searching for a boy to play the lead, Olmi encountered him in a young cousin's fifteen-year-old school friend. And Alessandro Panzeri, in whom critics have detected resemblances to the young Keaton, has already gone to work—at the kind of office job he gets in the film. Olmi, in fact, had never seen a Keaton film, although he caught up with *The General* in London.

Il Posto cost only about £22,000, which is cheap by any standards. Olmi's next project, *Il Sergente nella Neve* (*The Sergeant in the Snow*) is going to be more expensive and ambitious. Based on a novel, it is the story of a unit of Alpini, the Italian mountain troops, serving on the Russian front during the war, a small group caught up in a vast, alien battle. Olmi plans to film it in Russia, probably as a co-production. He wants to take an actual unit of Alpini, wants them to build for themselves the little fort in which the soldiers

lived, wants in fact to reconstruct actuality. This is not a fanatical insistence on realism at all costs, but a simple statement of how he likes to work. Neo-realism, he thinks, died a long time ago, killed by the efforts to compromise with commercialism. *Il Posto*, with its amused, affectionate and essentially honest observation of a boy finding his feet in his first job, is a commercial success in Italy; but its maker has not yet reached a point where he has to be alarmed by the contamination of success. He works, he says, from a detailed plan of script and characterisation, but decides on just how his story will be told on the screen only at the moment of shooting: it is the calibre of the people he's using which dictates the nature of his observation. He works quickly, seldom going beyond two or three takes, not only for reasons of economy but to conserve his amateur players' spontaneity.

A final question concerned the intriguing credit to "The Twenty-Four Horses" among *Il Posto's* production companies. The film was backed to some extent by a group of Olmi's friends, and in looking for a name to identify themselves, and reacting against the Milanese tradition of florid company titles, they went back to Muybridge and his experiment of filming a galloping horse. Why is the credit in English? Because, says Olmi, Muybridge was an Englishman.

Letter from Warsaw

BOLESŁAW MICHAŁEK writes: Discussing the situation of the Polish cinema a year ago in SIGHT AND SOUND, I said that we were going through a transition stage and that some line of direction was likely to emerge in the months to come. Now, a year later, I suspect that this "transition period" is always with us—always the same hesitations, the same uncertainties. And always the same insistence that the series of films about the war should come to an end. After all, there's something unnatural about a country, living a normal life, which is shown through its cinema as an enormous battlefield, with heroes and martyrs moving among the bomb bursts. In the last few months there have been six more films on war subjects, though only two demand serious attention. And so the press campaign continues: Poland's cinema is asked to abandon the "big subject" and turn its attention to everyday life. Official circles actively encourage the contemporary theme; the public, however unpredictable its reactions, seems thoroughly bored with war films. Everyone is in agreement. And is that, perhaps, the difficulty?

But we are seeing the first results of the campaign, in a number of new films which apparently meet these demands. And after each new picture one says, a bit sadly: yes, it's something like that, but that isn't quite it. The results, in terms of contemporary subjects, have in fact been fairly slender. Here are a few examples. Wanda Jakubowska, director of *The Last Stage*, has made *Contemporary Story*, about a theft of industrial alcohol and the fatal consequences. But this simply told story remains at the end what it was at the beginning—a rather unimportant incident, with the moral that one shouldn't drink methylated spirits. Fair enough, but it doesn't take us very far. Julian Dziedzina's *The Decision* essays psychological melodrama, but is dogged by clichés. Komorowski's *The Glass Mountain* promises more, in its story of a sophisticated girl's provincial encounter with an artless, hard-working young man. Although the playing is fresh, and the contrasts between two worlds not without interest, the film as a whole remains rather flat. Jan Batory's *The President's Visit* has larger pretensions. The story comes from a novel by Jerzy Zawieyski, about a lonely boy, ignored by his parents, who escapes into fantasy. He dreams of a friend, president of an imaginary country, who expresses all the sympathy and companionship the child misses in life. A naïve, fragile poetry makes the original something more than a sentimental evocation of dreamy childhood; unhappily, Batory's direction stresses every sentimental aspect of the story. Finally there is *Naphtha*, directed by Stanisław Lenartowicz, whose *Winter Twilight* caused a minor sensation in 1955. His new film has a ragged scenario, but is the most interesting of this group both in its social annotations and in the coherence of its style.

The so-called "Polish School" had a kind of unity—intellectually and morally, if not aesthetically. Now the Polish cinema has lost this group unity, and we're left with individuals pursuing different objectives, essaying their own personal discoveries. Among them,

Andrzej Munk at work on his last film, "Passengers". Best-known, after Wajda, of the Polish directors, Munk was killed in a car crash last autumn while still working on this film.



three at least have recently made noteworthy films. The first is Jerzy Kawalerowicz, whose *Mother Joan of the Angels*, shown at Cannes last year and during the recent Polish Film Week in London, has stimulated equally violent enthusiasm and criticism. Detractors have found the film arid and over-aesthetic. But in spite of his liking for a rather abstract kind of beauty, Kawalerowicz goes beyond the limits set by his own formula and his convent setting. He is concerned especially with the pressures of conformity and the inevitable revolt when this pressure builds up; and with the absurd (but human) reactions to an over-disciplined rule of life. His conclusions, admittedly, are confused, but he's tried to give us a reflection on his subject rather than a pronouncement.

Less brilliant, though equally interesting, is Kazimierz Kutz' *Panic on a Train* (also in the Polish Film Week). It's a study of a group of people brought together by chance at a small station during the war, waiting for a train. The investigation is as much psychological as social: a portrait gallery which, through shrewd observation, becomes an unpretentious comment on society in a moment of crisis. Danger brings the group together; when it passes, people again go their separate ways, pursuing their journey into the shadows of war.

The third film is *Birth Certificate*, by Stanislaw Rozewicz, a director whose pictures (*Free City*, *A Place on Earth*) have so far had only limited success. The tone of his films is sober, quiet, almost ascetic; there is no great drive, but a reflective, slightly bitter flavour, becoming sharper with each successive film. *Birth Certificate*, which is in three episodes, is scripted by his brother Tadeusz, one of the more notable of the young Polish poets. The subject—war as seen by a child—has been overworked for sentimental effect. But Rozewicz, with his calm, observant technique, treats it with a kind of hallucinatory gravity.

There are other films, such as Andrzej Wajda's *Samson*, not a success but confirming in some sequences its director's visionary power. General trends? Let's not talk about them for the time being. The films must create the trend, not the other way around.

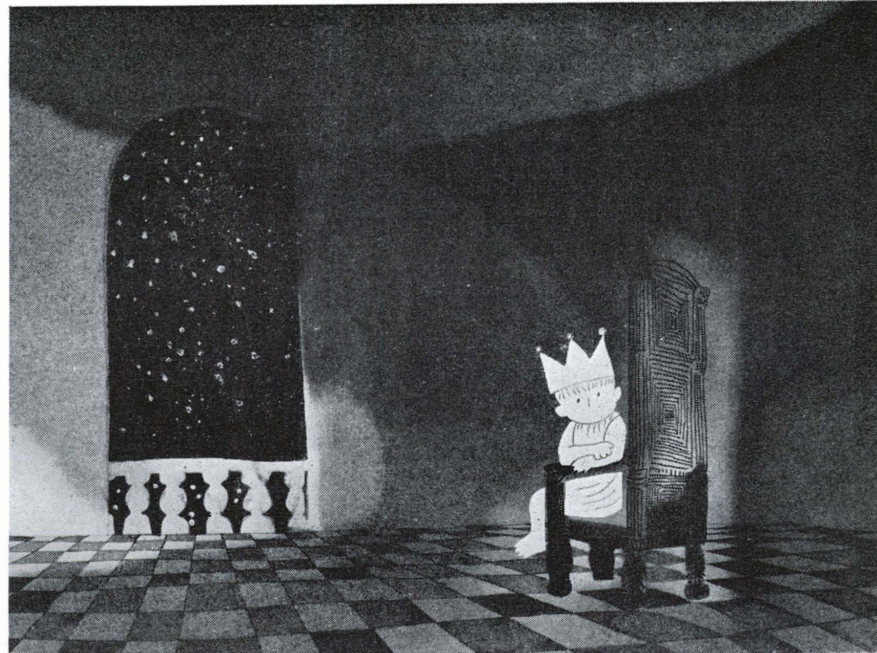
Evolution of a Cartoonist

DAVID ROBINSON writes: John Hubley looks rather like a Hollywood *jeune premier* of the Forties who has kept his looks. Originally trained as a painter, he is friendly, modest and quiet spoken. He recalls his days at Disney with gratitude, even though he was one of the people involved in the famous Burbank strike of 1941. "I was with Disney from 1936 to 1941. I worked as an assistant art director on *Snow White*, and associate art director on *Pinocchio*, part of *Fantasia*, *Bambi* and *Dumbo*. They were days of terrific technical development, and the Disney studios were a wonderful school. There were classes in every phase of cartoon and animation work. It was only in my last year or so there that I began to feel the restrictions of Disney's production methods. The trouble was the depersonalised *horizontal* system—a sort of conveyor belt idea. The marvellous training developed your imagination and ideas, which were then inhibited by the need to conform to a standardised style. We just got so sick of humanising pigs and bunnies. We wanted to do films about human characters and real life situations. And we wanted to do satire, which is a natural method for the cartoon."

After the breakaway Hubley found himself with Columbia's Screen Gems unit, which was for a short time supervised by Frank Tashlin, another old Disney alumnus. "You should try to see those films—*Mr. Tall and Mr. Small*, and particularly *Rags to Rags* in which we used a pastel technique. I don't think people remember them now, but they represented the first revolution against the characteristic Disney round and opaque forms."

Demobilised from the army in 1947, Hubley joined UPA, which had been formed during the war by Hilberman and Bosustow, one of the Burbank subversives. For UPA Hubley designed *Brotherhood of Man*, which was sponsored by the United Auto Workers Union, and directed his first cartoon, *Flathatting*, a U.S. Navy training film. "We experimented with everything in those days—forms and colours, collages and pastiches of famous painters. After a couple of years we attracted the attention of Columbia, who needed shorts and whose Screen Gems unit had folded. We made one or two films with old Screen Gems characters—the Fox and the Crow—and I directed *Robin Hoodlum*. Then I made the first Magoos film, *Ragtime Bear*."

Hubley made five more Magoos, but by 1950 the old UPA team had begun to fall away. Hubley left in 1952, and the last of the originals, Bosustow, in 1960. "The trouble was that it got too large. Before we knew where we were, we were getting more and more concerned with administration and less with creation. There were



John Hubley's "Of Stars and Men".

other pressures too. I began to find the same trouble, later, with my own Storyboard outfit, which I started in 1952 after I'd finished the animated sequence for *The Four Poster*—my last work at UPA. We began with commercials, and before I really noticed I had a huge staff and offices on the East and West coasts. So I closed down the California end and settled down with a little group in New York—the way I want to make films."

In Storyboard Inc. Hubley has the assistance of his wife Faith, a film editor, and several little Hubleys whose voices are heard most prominently in *The Moonbird*. Following the impressive list of awards collected by this film, and by *Adventures of an **, *Tender Game* and *Harlem Wednesday*, Storyboard Inc. have set themselves new problems. "We've come to recognise the gap between the scientist and Us; and our task is to find ways of giving science a new language to close the gap. That's what we attempted in *Of Stars and Men*, which we did in consultation with the great astronomer Harlow Shapley." The next project is a film on Relativity. "It's involving a lot of reading."

Work in Progress

Great Britain

PHILIP LEACOCK: *The War Lover*, from John Hersey's novel, with Steve McQueen and Shirley Anne Field. For Columbia release.

TONY RICHARDSON: starts *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* early in the year, with Tom Courtenay as the Borstal boy of Alan Sillitoe's story. Next John Osborne's adaptation of *Tom Jones*, most ambitious of Woodfall's projects, to be filmed in colour and big screen, with a half-million pound budget.

JOHN SCHLESINGER: ex-documentary director (*Terminus*, many films for *Monitor*) is making his first feature, *A Kind of Loving*. Based on a novel by Stan Barstow, the film stars Alan Bates and June Christie and is being made partly on Lancashire locations.

United States

GEORGE CUKOR: *The Chapman Report*, with Shelley Winters, Jane Fonda and Martin Balsam. Small town setting, in the *Peyton Place* tradition, with Kinsey-type investigation in progress. For Warners.

JOHN FORD: an intriguingly titled Western, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, with John Wayne and James Stewart. For Paramount release.

SIDNEY LUMET: screen version of Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*, with Katharine Hepburn, Ralph Richardson, Dean Stockwell and Jason Robards Jr. Shooting in New York.

NICHOLAS RAY: *Fifty-five Days in Peking*, story of the Boxer Rebellion and siege of the British legation. A Samuel Bronston production, like *King of Kings*, to be filmed in Spain.

MARTIN RITT: *Hemingway's Young Man*, based on Hemingway's Nick Adams stories, with Richard Beymer, Paul Newman, Susan Strasberg, Eli Wallach. A Jerry Wald production, for Fox.

GLANCING THROUGH A print-fresh programme for the 1961 London Festival, one ticks off the friends one expects to be either irritated or excited by each film according to temperament. Thus *Une Femme est une Femme* will—and does—reduce one colleague to impotent rage. De Givray's *Tire-au-flanc* will be—and is—full of private *Cahiers* jokes, and it is a matter of conjecture whether these will outweigh, for the initiates, the aversion they might otherwise have to barrack-room humour. And so on into the National Film Theatre's "Channel Crossing" season following immediately after, like a Festival coda. One finds the same clash of temperament and opinion, excitingly sharper and less predictable than at any time in years, with Jacques Rivette's new film *Paris Nous Appartient* fascinating me, generally stupefying the audience and impelling another colleague to express heartfelt relief that we are still spared a Channel tunnel.

A trivial attitude to take towards an international festival? Not really. The London Film Festival has if anything gained in importance this time, and for two reasons. Firstly, because it concentrated on the cinema's most recent renaissances, one in Italy and the slightly older one in France, usefully indicating

the extent and limitations of each country's new social and artistic frontiers. Secondly, because of the last-minute absence of certain notable directors (Resnais, Antonioni) and the fact that others were some way below their best (Kurosawa, Chukhrai, Godard), the field was open to the newcomers. And so, as much by accident as design, 1961 became a Festival rich above all in promise and youthful resolve. If I have chosen to write solely about the three Italian tiros and—by including the highly relevant Rivette film—three of the French, this implies no lack of interest in the rest of the Festival entry. Space, more than fashion, dictates. And I am anxious to stand my ground within the battlefield of most widespread current interest in the hope that conclusions may be arrived at and perspectives broadened.

1

In France and Italy the pressures of the Sixties' climate of errant intellect versus desperate commercialism are probably equal, but this year they seem to have been resolved and integrated more successfully than last. In Italy, 1960's *malaise* was reflected in scenes of poverty, perversion and youthful dispossession, and hinted a final tearful complicity in Rossi's *Death of a Friend* and a hollow, hotted-up protest in Bolognini's *Notte Brava*; in France, Chabrol's attempted escape into shopgirl fantasy was the most depressing event of the whole London Festival. Box-office bait such as co-production, the star system and well-tried script devices trapped almost every French and Italian director except Truffaut and Antonioni. In 1961 the shackles are off, and no director represented in the Festival has discarded them with quite such a clank of deliberate, brutish iconoclasm as Pier Paolo Pasolini, the director of *Accattone*.

Pasolini is widely regarded—more through his books and poems about the *ragazzi di vita* than through screenplays other directors have bowdlerised—as Italy's most influential Marxist intellectual. His emotional sympathies, furthermore, have invoked murmurs of Genêt, and so altogether Pasolini can be

PETER JOHN DYER

THE NEW FRONTIERS

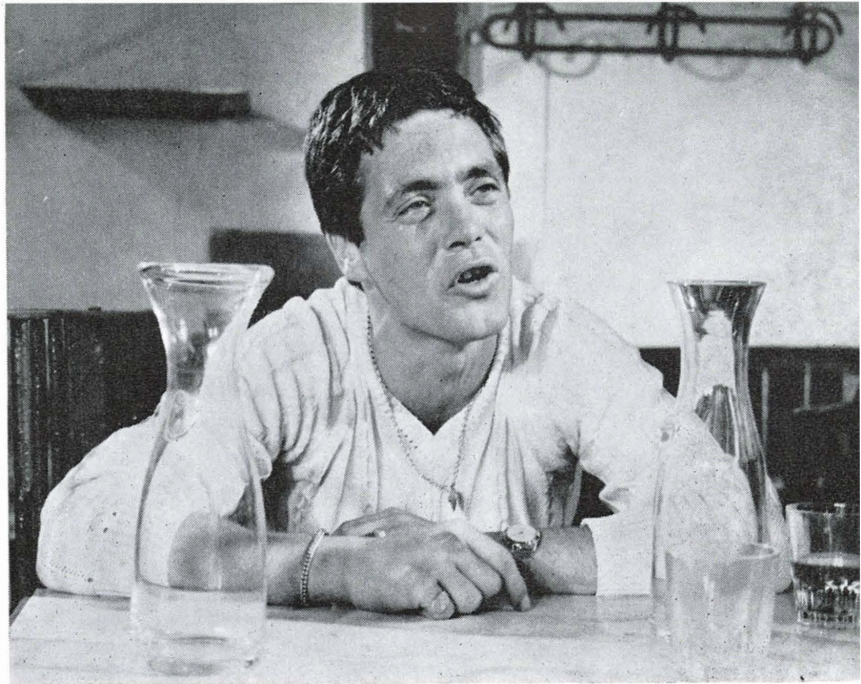


certain of one thing: his work will be received with the utmost caution by liberal critics. They, more than anyone, are likely to reject the slightest hint of self-indulgence (though they will often take the *Rocco* kind, since this is stylised and therefore remote), of protest incorporating sex, violence and overt social propaganda. Well, for them, Pasolini could hardly be guiltless: the dialogue does slip occasionally into the platform gesture; a sprawling fight between Accattone and his brother-in-law is brilliantly, lovingly shot all over the dusty road as a deliberate *tour de force*; and Franco Citti's persuasively handsome, heavy-eyed presence as Accattone can only help to increase the seediness felt by those viewers constitutionally averse to differentiating between a trend and a man, and a sponger and a loafer at that.

There isn't, so one has heard it argued, very much of interest to know about illiterates, petty criminals, tarts and pimps. Admittedly, Antonioni gave a certain weight to this view when he came unstuck with *I Vinti* and the tongue-tied hero of *Il Grido*. In the face of such possible discouragement Pasolini stands firm. *Accattone* is no sensational paraphernalia of baroque imaginings and sweat-shirt stars jumping to order through dramatic hoops. No less than *Los Olvidados*, it offers an experience of physical entry into seemingly familiar yet in fact unknown territory—here the bleached overcrowded hovels, lethargic cafés and police stations, riverside dance-halls and baking sky of Rome's slums.

Pasolini doesn't satisfy habitual middle-class demands on the genre: De Sica's sentimentality, Buñuel's destructiveness, attitudes of horror and patronage. What he does is make one aware of the big difference between a cosy understanding of his characters and the harsh actuality in terms of work as a degrading last resort, violence as an antidote to the inaction and neurasthenia of extreme poverty, and sheer hulking mistrust of society. It is an innately astringent view, propelling the story at a slow, inexorable tempo before a camera-eye travelling incessantly to and fro. Pasolini couldn't patronise if he tried, so he ennoble—through the Bach score, the almost grandiloquent dialogue and compositions, the powerful physical certainty of the rhythm as it switches from explosions of violence and uproarious laughter to the hollow-eyed stasis of starvation. He couldn't make allowances if he tried, for the simple reason that he is fully concerned with the poor, with their impulsive outlets and sly stratagems, their scrounging and savagery and faith in blind revenge. Accattone himself fills out the film's documentary haggardness, through his almost mystical preoccupation with self-abasement, sleep (open-eyed and using the shoulders of a scooter-rider as a head support), the river (where he pretends to drown, or throws himself prone on the bank to peer up shortly as a penitent, face bedaubed with sand) and—in the sinister, naturalistically shot dream sequence—death. It is a portrait whose nobility has helped to make the protest of the very poor something better than unimaginable, worth something more than a shrug.

In Ermanno Olmi's *Il Posto* the hero, a poker-faced, diffident boy, actually wants to work, to belong to middle-class society, to find a nice girl friend. At the crack of dawn he comes to Milan, from his family's packed suburban flat, full of wonder and a shy sense of humour. As with Pasolini, social comment is made with an unconventional, personal and incisive eye. Otherwise the tone is infinitely more reticent, the emphasis shifts. In *Accattone* "society" for the hero is an unfriendly, intangible force; he regards neither it nor himself as corrupt or evil; it is simply there, like poverty, and his instincts are doom-laden. In *Il Posto* "society" is personified in the looming presence of an outsize department head, whose tea must be ritually stirred by a grey-haired, motherly secretary with a discreet line in encouraging smiles for polite young interviewees. The interviewers themselves are well-meaning but gloriously humourless; the boy's hierarchy of fellow-



Franco Citti in Pasolini's "Accattone".

workers, when he finally attains office status, ground down by meanness, worry and myopia.

Yet the film remains a gem of understatement, with the warmth, freshness and human oddity of the best kind of social comedy. What is extraordinary is how Olmi, with his documentary background and boundless generosity, has managed to combine the film's underlying left-wing satire and implicitly pessimistic conclusion with the lightest of romantic elements, such as the boy's adolescent love for an unsentimental, gravel-voiced girl (played charmingly by Loredana Detto). In construction the film is perfect, taking in its stride such set-pieces as the series of pompous exam-interviews, the short-hand impressionism of the home lives of some of the staff, and the sustained, pathetically funny office party, with a thirsty old dear casting acquisitive eyes on the boy's unopened bottle of wine, and a weaselly young rip ogling a bored, middle-aged manager's wife who obviously regards herself as the latest thing in *femmes fatales*. The feeling, too, is unflawed: Olmi has no time for easy gibes. The narrative trips forward without benefit of linking devices, cutting away from incidental comic possibilities before they've reached screen centre, blurring the lovers as they dodge through traffic, holding respectfully still when they just stand and talk. Few films have seemed less bitter about futility. Olmi is one of the rare talents who can apparently transfigure poverty of scope and ambition without sentimentalising it.

Elio Petri's *L'Assassino* bridges the gap between down-town city life where Poletti, the antiquary hero, has a second-hand shop dependent for its stock on petty crime and a vulturous call on a fence in the last stages of dropsy, and the self-satisfied security of a rich and beautiful mistress, expensive clothes and a Giulietta Sprint car. Where *Accattone* and *Il Posto* are socially explicit and only intermittently dreamlike, *L'Assassino*'s mood is nonchalant, subliminal, drenched in a nightmarish brew of farce and intangible menace. Poletti is woken one morning by the police to find himself suspected of his mistress's murder and inextricably compromised by his present position. He loves another girl; he had severed connections with his mistress the night she threatened him and died; police investigations fail to produce a single charitable voice from his past; the newspapers accuse him of everything from fraud to homosexuality. Meanwhile the detective in charge drops off to sleep for a moment during his interrogation, or drifts down to the dead woman's beach to skim pebbles over the water. Stripped of every vestige of remaining hope, locked in a cell with a couple of alarming crooks, Poletti comes to the aid of his inquisitors and starts tormenting himself with fistfuls of compromise and indifference dredged up out of his muddy past. By now fatally

Opposite: interview with the department head in "Il Posto".



Marcello Mastroianni and fellow prisoner in "L'Assassino".

poisoned by his own guilt, he is released and set at large again.

L'Assassino shares with the other two films a wry wit, consistently fascinating observation and an absorption in its characters' moral and social place in the (albeit factually detailed) scheme of things. It is very well made, and Marcello Mastroianni's habitual appearance of a man fighting off a smile in the face of disaster has never seemed as effective as here. The film's limitations are structural—the flashback device is relied on to a degree that is almost disjunctive—and temperamental. Petri's attitude is emotionally withdrawn, consistently cynical, so that an episode like Poletti's encounter with his mother reveals its inspiration as exterior, too obviously reminiscent of Marcello's meeting with his father in *La Dolce Vita*. But the film is for the most part full of audacities, very few of them derivative or unsuccessful.

Since the war, serious Italian film-making has always been in a state of transition. The styles and tenets of the best neo-realist directors were never completely evolved; their work never gained a firm hold on the public, and the fight against widening commercialisation involved longer and more and more disheartening struggles. Visconti turned to studio experiments of "neo-romanticism", then neo-verismo, Castellani to Shakespeare and the Soviet-style epic, Fellini to the social fresco; for nearly ten years Antonioni remained ahead of his time, locked in a private battle. None of the newcomers in the middle Fifties—Maselli, Rosi, Rossi, Bolognini—established a trend or reflected a firm critical theory. Consequently, lacking an established movement to react against (one could hardly describe the Biblical spectacles which pour annually from Italian studios as a movement), suspicious of

and temperamentally averse to the kind of foreign experiment which looks the least like bluff or wilful doodling, and inhibited by local problems of political and cultural inertia, it is not surprising that Pasolini, Olmi and Petri should share preoccupations which are primarily social. Perturbed by this inertia, they show their heroes as victims of it. There is no false hope in their films, which are all humanely pessimistic, artistically disciplined and essentially unrevolutionary.

2

It is a tribute to at least two of the three *nouvelle vague* films I want to write about that they stand up to such formidably safe virtues through sheer force of invention and conviction. *Une Aussi Longue Absence*, Henri Colpi's film about a woman who thinks she recognises in a tramp the husband who disappeared years earlier in the war, is the one that falls down on both these counts. One salutes its brave attempt to catch the poetry hovering between credulity and disbelief. And yet, for all the delicacy of Georges Wilson's performance, disbelief wins. Those refined hands, picking endlessly at the string round a parcel, are they the hands of a tramp? And Valli, with her thick Italian accent and sad, tentative smile—never more beatific than when swooning gracefully to the floor—is she really the owner of a *bistro*? But then one realises this is one of those literary meditations about time, love, marriage and separation, admirable in the care and assiduity with which so little plot has been put together, and curiously, suffocatingly lifeless. Marguerite Duras' spare dialogue drones on in snatches, each word tastefully chosen, like a priestess's robes, draped around inviolate flesh. Eventually the solemnity repels; or perhaps it is just the artificiality—the sense of an obsessive situation too remote from reality for one to care whether it is true or false, whether it resolves itself in the future or not. An exquisite, skilful work, but how it sets one longing in the most reactionary manner for the narrative meat, the characterisation and the sheer sweat of the Italian pictures.

Where Colpi's film moons over time and love, and Godard's *Une Femme est une Femme* breaks them down into a kaleidoscope of one-shot tricks, ideas and uneven private jokes so fragmentary as to induce critical amnesia, Jacques Demy's *Lola* crystallises past and present into an anamorphic reflection of everyone's own personal experiences of love. For an ex-documentary man of 29 this is a remarkable experiment—mature, intricate, lyrical and yet mathematically precise. The form is that of a fable, written round the attractive character of a night-club dancer who never gives up hope that the lover who left her with a baby seven years ago will one day return; a rich man. The film is dedicated to Max Ophüls, and like *La Ronde* works itself out through a systematic series of encounters. Lola's first love Michel returns, a white-suited stranger in a flashing car. He meets an American sailor who meets and takes up with Lola who then meets Roland, a



Anouk Aimée as "Lola".

moody, bookish young man who knew her when he was a boy. Roland meets Cécile, a child who reminds him of the Lola he once knew, Cécile goes to the fair with the sailor, who then meets Roland who finally meets Michel who is reunited with Lola. They drive off with their son, passing Roland as he walks disconsolately along the quay.

Within this framework of coincidence and contracted time, Demy offers a composite portrait of Lola at various stages of her life. This is the more extraordinary considering that there isn't a single flashback, and that the other characters are used to harmonise with the time-pattern without losing any of their own individuality. Just as Cécile incarnates Lola's past, her mother (stylishly played by the incomparable Elina Labourdette) symbolises Lola's future; the sailor reminds Lola of Michel, Michel turns out to be somebody's long-lost son, and so on. Demy rings the same sort of changes on his style, throwing in Beethoven, Bach, a slow-motion Vigo sequence, elegant high-angle travelling shots of Nantes (his birth-place), a lot of sun-struck camerawork (Raoul Coutard) and a shrugged-off cabaret dance by Anouk Aimée's delectable Lola. The film, in fact, breaks every textbook rule without once sacrificing grace or truth to the peculiar gaiety of its fairy-tale logic.

3

Where the young Italians seek a solution to the antinomy between non-revolutionary art and a need for social revolution, the French newcomers seek one between a national classical tradition (their films are full of tributes to Feuillade, Vigo, Renoir) and a revolutionary, non-traditional (i.e. non-Carné, non-Clouzot, non-Clair) form. On the one hand, this form blends all manner of incongruous influences (Monogram Pictures, Murnau, Hitchcock, Bergman) and—as in a Renoir film—characters; on the other, it jumps across space and time.

In common with Godard, Resnais and Demy, Jacques Rivette shares this preoccupation with the continuum. *Paris Nous Appartient*, his long-awaited first film, is in many ways as authentically strange as *L'Année Dernière*, but is less likely to start any critical landslide in his favour. He emerges as the most openly worried of the four, the most obviously aware of a crisis, but he is the least successfully integrated artist. He is an aesthete and an intellectual, conscious of the limitations of his (and his contemporaries') intellect and aestheticism, and seeking to portray the helplessness of his (and his characters') predicament as they seek to resolve and/or escape from it.

Rivette's diverse portrait of young intellectual Paris is not an original one: the innocent outsider (Betty Schneider) moving from enthusiasm through intrigue to unwitting complicity in suicide and murder; the enigmatic French-American *femme fatale*, played with baleful authority by Françoise Prévost; the paranoid American exiled by McCarthyism; the idealistic fringe-theatre producer with his fragile optimism; the emigrés of all kinds, the gossips, the posturing decadents. Nor are their points of agreement original: art is beauty and must be pursued (the heroine undertakes a sort of holy grail search for the taped composition of a Spanish "genius" driven to suicide); art must bring a finished design to shapelessness as Shakespeare does in *Pericles* (the producer's pet project); art must have to do with life and youth, or it will starve. Yet life and art are not necessarily beautiful, and here the originality of Rivette's conception comes into play. Rather than convey a realistic group picture of young people's lives, he conveys the group's recognition of the doomed emptiness of its existence.

He does this by the bold stratagem of implying a kind of secret, world-wide conspiracy: one that lacks positively identifiable agents or design. The mood—similar to that of Lang's Mabuse films—is established at the start, with a distraught girl confiding her garbled indictment of spies, intriguers, politicians, the Bomb, out of the edge of an almost empty screen. From then on, by means of a hypnotic narrative,



"Paris Nous Appartient": "... a distraught girl confiding her garbled indictment . . . out of the edge of an almost empty screen."

tight, close-up dissolves, a supremely unsettling electronic score and a proliferation of scribbled notes, 'phone calls, door-to-door visits and car-rides through silent streets lined with empty cars, the sense of impending cosmic disaster never lets up. In a finale as melodramatically effective as the first reel of *Orphée*, the heroine blindly obeys the orders of the *femme fatale* to follow her car in a taxi, ends up in the garden of a deserted country house where men are tending a sinister bonfire, is horrified to learn that her brother has just been "executed" by the *femme fatale* on tenuous grounds of "treason"—and sets about discussing renewed rehearsals for *Pericles*.

Ambitious, long, always fascinating, this film partakes of the ritualistic nature of Lang, Cocteau and American thrillers like *Kiss Me Deadly* without quite reconciling the fantastic adventure element with the realistic. It is neither as streamlined as *Orphée* nor as sure in the spacing and weight of its climaxes. The acting, particularly in the first party scene, is sometimes stilted and pretentious. Too much has been left in that is irrelevant. There isn't, in other words, enough of that unity within diversity which the producer admires so much in *Pericles*.

Rivette's rhythm has a measured grace, distinct from Resnais' sacerdotal loftiness in its sudden bursts of affectionate reminiscence (a few moments of *Metropolis* are thrown in, for instance). Yet Resnais' chilly, proud aestheticism is at any rate controlled: it has incisiveness and the courage of its (to me) unsympathetic convictions. Resnais' ivory tower impresses me more as a wax museum, whereas Rivette seems more human, more concerned for the future, utterly ungodlike in his assurance. And so the film ultimately fails. Suffering from the vices of his virtues, Rivette's vision remains unfocused, lacking in cogency.

Perhaps this is why I personally prefer *Paris Nous Appartient* to *L'Année Dernière* and *A Bout de Souffle*: for the reason that Rivette obviously knows a complete and healthy cinema needs premonition as well as present climate, experiment as well as finished achievement, the ambition to penetrate out of chaos into communal existence. The awareness is oblique but it is there. And it is why Rivette strikes me as being (with Truffaut) the most broadly hopeful of the young talents yet to be thrown up by the *nouvelle vague*.



"Wedding March".

Erich von Stroheim

THE LEGEND AND THE FACT

DENIS MARION

ERICH VON STROHEIM WAS never reluctant to talk about his family origins and childhood. Between 1918, when he first became famous as the author, director and star of *Blind Husbands*, and May 12th, 1957, when he died, innumerable biographical notices of him appeared. Their disagreements, affecting only minor points of detail, could be put down either to editorial carelessness or to some understandable lapse of memory on the part of the subject himself, from whom the information was derived.

In the interests of publicity, the American companies for which Stroheim worked chose to add some imaginary episodes to his career. When *The Merry Widow* came out in 1925, for instance, M-G-M hoped to give this Balkan operetta a greater flavour of pre-1914 authenticity by claiming that "Erich von Stroheim knew all the courts of Central Europe, that he had been military attaché at Cettigne and had profited from this experience to describe incidents which he had personally

witnessed." There was no truth whatever in this; but, taking advantage of this assertion and of certain details in the film, the exiled Prince Danilo of Montenegro managed to get it banned in Italy and Yugoslavia, and in France was awarded damages to the total of a hundred thousand francs.

But these inventions, which did not originate with the director himself, vanished with the occasion which had given rise to them and were soon forgotten. The information coming from Stroheim himself was repeatedly put on record. Here are three versions:

HOLLYWOOD SCAPEGOAT: This biography by Peter Noble, published in 1950, carried a short introduction by Stroheim, who provided the author with much of his documentation. Of his early life in Austria, the book records:

Erich Oswald Hans Carl Marie Stroheim von Nordenwald was born on September 22nd, 1885 in Vienna, where his father was a Colonel in the 6th Regiment of Dragoons, and his mother a lady-in-waiting to Elizabeth, Empress of Austria. The boy was educated at the Austrian Military Academy, and at the age of seventeen was commissioned—somewhat inevitably—as a second lieutenant in the Cavalry. He remained in the Austrian army for seven years.

In Vienna he had lived the normal life of a young man destined to take up the army as a career. His father, and his father before him, had been in the Austrian army. Stroheim's brother . . . was also an army officer. The von Nordenwalds were of military stock.

The reason for his decision to leave the army and emigrate to America was left vague.

WHO'S WHO: Notes in *Who's Who* are of course contributed by the subjects themselves, subject to editorial verification and abridgement. Stroheim's entry in the 1955-56 edition of *Who's Who in France* reads:

STROHEIM (Erich von). Pseudonym of: Stroheim (Erich von Norden Wall). Born September 22nd, 1885 at Vienna (Austria). Son of Hans Stroheim, civil servant, and Mme., née von Norden Wall. Educated: University of Vienna, Cadet School of the Military Academy at Neustadt (Austria). Career: Cavalry Lieutenant, Journalist. Emigrated to United States, etc.

ERIC VON STROHEIM: A Frenchman who signs himself Bob Bergut published this biography in 1960. He had several conversations with Stroheim—who knew that they were to feature in a book—and his text was submitted to Denise Vernac, Stroheim's companion during his last years, whose comments were put on record. So the following material can be regarded as fairly well authenticated

"I was born on September 22nd, 1885 at Vienna, in the seventh district . . . Some journalists have asserted that my father was Colonel of the 6th Regiment of Dragoons and my mother attached to the suite of the Empress Elizabeth. It's very good of them! The Empress had been dead for a long time, and my mother only had the Order of Elizabeth. My father was commanding officer—not colonel—of an infantry regiment . . ."

Let's not quibble about the date of the assassination of the Austrian Empress: 1898. The rest of the interview is reported:

After a short period at a private school, the boy attended the Cadet School at Moehrisch Weisskirchen. Some years later, the Military Academy at Wiener Neustadt put into his knapsack, like a marshal's baton, the rank and above all the uniform of subaltern. This was in 1902 . . . A lieutenant in 1908, the young Stroheim briefly attended the Austrian Staff College before being assigned to the Dragoons of the old Emperor Franz Joseph. It was at this time that he received the injury (a kick from a horse) which scarred his neck. He had no time to take care of himself and left to fight for Bosnia-Herzegovina. Then he emigrated to the United States . . .

There is no need to pile up quotations. The same basic facts recur in the hundreds of articles devoted to Stroheim both before and since his death.

These antecedents perfectly fitted the first image the screen

retained of Erich von Stroheim. In five propaganda films made in Hollywood during the First World War, he created a German officer type so striking in character, gestures and manner that audiences found it easy to believe the actor was simply re-creating the career officer he had himself been. From this characterisation came the slogan on which his reputation was built: "The man you love to hate." At the very least, the more cautious critics imagined that the actor was developing a type of character whom he had had the chance to study close-up during his boyhood.

Von Stroheim was to return again and again to this screen prototype, extending and enriching the character; and the identification of the man and his favourite part earned him his brusque Hollywood nickname of "von". He was always aware of the publicity value of this image. While affecting to grumble that "the public imagined he drank blood for lunch and flogged his poor old grandmother," he ostentatiously maintained until the end of his days a manner in private life which encouraged this confusion of man and part. He affected a military stiffness, clicked his heels, bent double to bow, wore a gold bracelet on his wrist. The walls of his house were decorated with crossed swords, sabres and riding crops; and a saddle, mounted on a stand, did duty as an armchair.

* * *

I have always enormously admired von Stroheim; along with most film historians and critics, I consider him one of the screen's finest artists. While assembling material for a book which I wrote about him in 1959,* I tried to get some more circumstantial information about his childhood, suspecting that it had marked his personality in ways rather less clear-cut than is generally imagined.

But I ran into an absolute silence among those who had been his friends, both in Hollywood and in France. More surprising, when I questioned Austrian journalists I found that Stroheim was almost unknown in his native country. His films had not played there; his reputation came only as an echo from abroad. This ignorance could be the result of a kind of spontaneous ostracism, of which there are other examples in cases where film actors have made their careers outside their own countries. Stroheim, too, had not only given

**Erich von Stroheim*, by Denis Marion (Club du Livre de Cinéma, Brussels.)

up his own nationality to take American citizenship, but had not hesitated during 1917-18 to take part in propaganda directed against the Central Powers. Unable to cross-check information, I had to reprint the usual story in my book.

But I suspected a mystery, and invited Austrian readers to send me information about any omissions and errors in the book. In this way I got into correspondence with Mr. Emil Feldmar, actor and stage director, who is not only Erich von Stroheim's cousin but was also at school with him. He sent me an article from the *Wiener Woche Ausgabe* (1956, No. 7) which he had inspired and also gave me a good deal of family information. What he told me was so startling that I didn't feel justified in making any use of his information without documentary proof. And this, with some difficulty, I obtained.

The date of birth, the first two Christian names, the father's name and the district of Vienna: these are the limits of truth in Stroheim's statements. The rest is pure invention.

His father's name was Benno Stroheim. He was not Austrian by birth, but was born at Gleiwitz, then in Prussian Silesia and now the Polish town of Gliwice. Starting out as a dealer in felt and straw, then in feathers, he later became a manufacturer of straw and felt hats. He was a practising Jew, as was his wife, Johanna Bondy, born in Prague, where they were married on August 3rd, 1884.

The official documents (of which the birth certificate is reproduced here) all come from the Jewish community of Vienna, which then had its own registers. Stroheim's birth certificate carries the marginal reference: "Left the Jewish community, November 17th, 1908." This would undoubtedly be the result of his emigration to the United States. In the case of his younger brother Bruno, born in February, 1889, the same comment appears with the date of December 8th, 1913, although we do not know if he had already left Austria. Whether or not he kept up his contact with his elder brother, Bruno died on December 29th, 1958, after spending two years in an asylum at Lainz, a suburb of Vienna. The father in any event remained faithful to his religion, the evidence being provided by his death certificate—dated December 22nd, 1913.

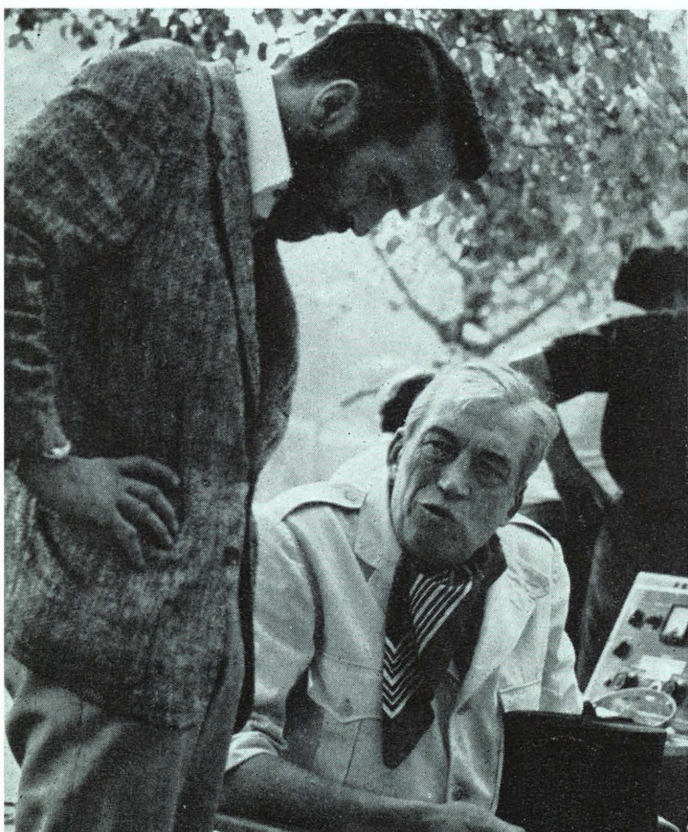
According to Emil Feldmar, Erich von Stroheim volunteered for the Austrian army, although as a private soldier. Before the end of the regulation year of service, he deserted for an unknown reason (a youthful misdemeanour, it's supposed) and emigrated to America as early as 1906.

(Continued on page 51)

Photostat of von Stroheim's birth certificate.

Reihe- zahl	Tag, Monat und Jahr der Geburt	Name des Geborenen	Ge- schlecht		Eigen- schaft		Eltern des Geborenen	
			männlich	weiblich	ehelich	uneheflich	Des Vaters Vor- und Zuname Charakter, Geburtsort	Der Mutter Vor- und Zuname Geburtsort
1464	22. Septem- ber 1885	Erich Oswald Stroheim	/		/		Benno Stroheim Kaufmann aus Gleiwitz in Preussen	Johanna Geborene Bondy





*John
Huston's*
F R E U D



Scenes from John Huston's film about the young Freud, scripted by Jean-Paul Sartre and Charles Kaufman and now being filmed in Munich and Vienna.

ABOVE LEFT: Wedding group, including Montgomery Clift and Susan Kohner and (as Freud's parents) David Kossoff and Rosalie Crutchley.

EXTREME LEFT: Montgomery Clift and John Huston on the set.

ABOVE: Clift and Susan Kohner.

LEFT: Huston and Clift with Susannah York, cast as one of Freud's first patients, and Larry Parkes, who returns to the screen as his colleague, Dr. Breuer.

RESNAIS

ANTONIONI

L'ANNEE DERNIERE A MARIENBAD

PENELOPE HOUSTON

L'ANNEE DERNIERE A MARIENBAD is not a film to be viewed from a neutral corner. The critic who likes to weigh and balance, to award a point here and subtract one there, to find it "impressive, but..." and "significant, although..." is not going to get much change out of this film. *L'Année Dernière* is a study in persuasion, and one which involves the audience as much as the people on the screen; and it is a work in which the technique and the action are quite literally fused. If it were not told in this particular way, the film would not exist. Form and content, the thing expressed as opposed to the way of expressing it, on this occasion become quite meaningless terms: try to write down a summary of the plot, out of the context in which the film gives it existence, and you would end up either with a blank sheet of paper or with your own interpretation of the picture. And this interlocking of elements in the film, and in its relationship with its audience, entitles it to a total response: accept the experience, or reject it.

Those who reject it, or see it as nothing much more than an exercise in pretentious mumbo-jumbo, have a well-entrenched line of sharp-shooting positions to argue from. A film in which almost every shot of the heroine could be frozen for re-employment as a fashion photograph is suspect. A film which contains no characters seen working for their living, eating solid food, thinking or talking about any aspect of life in the 'outside' world, obviously has nothing much directly to say about that world. A film which concentrates on a single love story, yet has hardly a vestige of passion in the ordinary sense

about it, may seem to be misfiring on a fairly essential cylinder. Resnais was accused of being trivial about a big theme in *Hiroshima mon Amour*, and this time he's criticised for being portentous about a little one. What does it matter what happened last year, in Marienbad or Fredericksbad, between these two over-dressed representatives of a world already dying on its feet? Irrefutable arguments, as far as they go, but they seem to me to be going a fair step in the wrong direction. They are trying to adjust the film to a context of objectivity which is not its own, asking it to declare and explain itself. And all it can declare *is* itself—or, rather, the invitation to experience it contains.

L'Année Dernière opens, like *Hiroshima mon Amour*, with a sustained and elaborate introductory passage; in *Hiroshima* Resnais called it the 'opera'—here it is certainly not less than the overture. The music behind the credits fades, and before the last names come up on the screen a voice is heard, impersonal, grave, and at first very quiet. The voice becomes clearer as the first images appear: the long corridors of a big hotel, empty of people but suggesting a weight of habitation in their rich, arrogant decoration. Incantatory, the voice continues: "Once again I walk, once again, along these corridors, across these *salons*, these galleries, in this edifice from another century, this huge, luxurious, baroque hotel..." Organ music drowns the voice, then it returns, then the music rises over it again. The camera tracks slowly, inevitably, hovers over a theatre poster, a print of a formal garden, a row of numbered doors, moves down corridors, across baroque ceilings, gives such crystalline clarity to a section of moulding that it looks like a glistening bunch of fruit waiting to be picked. Then people: an audience for a play, gathered in a great *salon*, motionless and abstracted as they sit on their little gilt chairs and watch the stage. The voice of the actor on the stage takes over, as it were, from the narrator. "Voilà maintenant," says the actress, "Je suis à vous." Curtain.

This opening is entirely hypnotic. Like the beginning of a fairy tale, it draws us into an alien world, gives us no chance to get our bearings, hints at clues which may or may not turn out to have meaning. Slowly, through a mosaic of images and fragments of dialogue, flashes of single figures, static groups, conversation pieces, all framed within the heavy theatricality of the setting, the theme of the film begins to crystallise. A stranger (Giorgio Albertazzi), a woman (Delphine Seyrig), the man "who may be her husband" (Sacha Pitoëff) are drawn into focus; the setting changes and shifts, the sense of interaction, hardly yet more than a suspicion, between present and past, imposes itself; and the stranger keeps up his unrelenting monologue, his claim to have come to a fixed meeting place,

a rendezvous with the woman arranged "last year, at Marienbad," with the purpose of taking her away with him.

The stranger's strength is in the sheer pressure of will: he wants it to be so; it will be so; it is so. Did they know each other, were they in love, if so, why does she resist the memory, if not, what is his motive? Are they patient and analyst, or does each achieve existence only in the imagination of the other? These are enticing though perhaps irrelevant questions. We are watching a conviction gradually taking shape on the screen, spreading out, acquiring an independent form, drawing in nourishment from the air around it like a Japanese flower dropped into a bowl of water. Gradually we realise that the stranger's territory is that formal, continental garden with its neatly clipped trees, gravel paths, ornamental lakes and neo-classical statuary. The ground floor of the hotel is, as it were, neutral ground; and the woman's bedroom is her territory, ceded only when persuasion has already gone far towards winning the day. An initial hint of secession comes in those hallucinatory shots of her room, a series of flashes, each almost imperceptibly longer than the last, from the sombre darkness of the hotel bar to this blinding white room, as yet bare and unfurnished by imagination. The stranger enters the room—and in the bar a glass is suddenly dropped by the woman, smashing into a reverberating silence, while a servant scurries forward to mop up the broken fragments.

Much later in the film, an agonised cry from the woman brings us back to the scene at the bar: the silence, the still figures, the frozen moment. It's an effect—a juggling with

time to communicate a world outside time—that Resnais uses elsewhere, always electrifyingly. The stranger tells the heroine of a meeting between them, of how they walked through the garden, how she slipped and broke the heel off her shoe. And, later, we see an encounter, filmed in long shot, see the pair walking up the gravel path, see her suddenly stumble and clutch at his arm. Again, near the end of the film, she demands that the stranger leave her—and a balustrade gives way under him as he leans his weight on it. We cut sharply away from this fantasy; yet when we come back to the garden, there, still, is the broken balustrade. In their context, these moments are eerie, ominous, charged with tension. They are part of the whole elaborate process of involvement in the man's belief, catching us unaware, forcing us into a world in which the real is not quite real, the imagined not quite unreal; in which there are only a series of possibilities, which become actual once they are admitted and accepted.

The husband—the man who may be the husband, as the film-makers insist—remains somewhat on the periphery of the dream. He plays, endlessly and largely with the stranger, a game with matchsticks, which he always wins. (In another of the film's flashes into pure fantasy, we see the heroine, stretched out on her bed, with photographs of herself spread out in the pattern of this game.) The game is a contest of wills; and the husband wins. A group of statues in the garden plays a crucial part in the stranger's apparatus of persuasion; and the husband, the man of reason, 'explains' the statues. Who, then, is the real winner? As the stranger's arguments begin to break

"L'Année Dernière à Marienbad": Delphine Seyrig.



down the heroine's resistance, so the tone of the film darkens. The pistol shooting—a silent row of figures, spread across the screen, turning in elegant ritual to fire at invisible targets—assumes a more menacing emphasis. She envisages her own death; she turns to the husband for reassurance (“I am here with you, in this room, don’t leave me”) and gets only the reasoned and just answer: “But it is you who are leaving, you know that.” And so she goes to the midnight meeting with the stranger, sits waiting rigidly for the clock to strike, leaves with him. But about this ending there is no sense of exaltation or relief. She goes because she has no choice, because for her all the possibilities have narrowed down to a single decision, but she has no idea where she is going. The stranger’s final words offer no comforting clue: “It seemed, at first sight, impossible to lose yourself in that garden . . . where you are now already beginning to lose yourself, for ever, in the quiet night, alone with me.” The film’s last shot is of the great chateau; and, with its few lighted windows, it no longer looks like a prison but like a place of refuge.

This ending, shadowed with apprehension, can be explained as one chooses. The prince, one could say, has rescued the sleeping princess from the haunted castle—and there are enough hints of fairy tale about the film to justify this. But was the princess safer in her sleep? The enigma invites a subjective interpretation; as, of course, does the entire film. Deliberately, it embeds itself in a setting as artificial, as frozen, as shuttered against time and the world, as the sleeping beauty’s own haunted castle. The actors have been encouraged to do nothing which would break the spell—nothing, that is, which would bring their own personalities into play. Delphine Seyrig’s attitudes are hieratic; Giorgio Albertazzi is a kind of personification of moral force; Sacha Pitoëff is a deep, resonant voice speaking from an elongated black and white form. They are automatons. The film’s passion is predominantly intellectual, and it is the idea, not the man, that triumphs. She does not ‘go away’ with him: she accepts her necessary place in his dream.

* * *

“Reality is a cipher with many solutions, all of them right ones.” This is not either of the two Alains, Resnais or Robbe-Grillet, in one of the many decidedly gnomonic statements they have made about their film, but one of the manipulators of effect in *The Flight from the Enchanter*, Iris Murdoch’s most cryptic book. Seeing *L’Année Dernière*, I was oddly and unexpectedly reminded, at however many removes, of an Iris Murdoch novel. There is a similar setting up of a world consistent to itself, but only contingent to ours. Symbols, in the same way, are suspiciously ready to yield up an immediate significance—Resnais’ statues, his pistol-shots, his match-stick game—while keeping other meanings in reserve. Recurring fantasies of violence play a not dissimilar part; emotions are not only felt but willed to be felt.

Comparisons of this kind, of course, should be taken only so far; they are at best no more than marginal. But *L’Année Dernière*, if written as a novel, would certainly seem nothing like as audacious or challenging as it does on the screen. Subjective time, recurring time, the gradations of reality and experience, are nothing strange to the modern novel. But the film can accommodate them more easily—or more suggestively; and since its essential ingredients are space and time it can manoeuvre in both at once, make both relative to its own purposes. In *Hiroshima mon Amour* Resnais explored time and memory from a fixed point of reference. Here there is no fixed point, and consequently the film imposes its own time. When it ends, it is over, apart from the echoes it sets reverberating in our minds. It has come full circle, from the scene on the stage at the beginning (“Je suis à vous”) to the setting out into the dark garden; but how long has it taken to do so? An evening in the heroine’s mind; a week of persuasive effort by the man? It has taken, one can only say, the time it needed on the screen. As Alain Robbe-Grillet wrote in an

article published in our last issue, it assumes as its starting point the basic fact that the screen image is always in the present tense. From here it evolves its own transitions: juxtaposes light images, such as the dazzlingly fast, over-exposed tracking shot when the heroine moves out from the hotel to the light of the garden balustrade, with sombre ones; allows us foreknowledge and then uses this itself to startle us; gives us not flashbacks in time but a supersubtle orchestration of real and imagined, the border lines of hallucination.

When Resnais says that he and Robbe-Grillet thought of filming a crime story in the same setting, and that if they had done this they would probably have made much the same film, it sounds like a piece of deliberate perversity. But one begins to have an inkling of what he means. Persuasion can function in many forms: as between detective and criminal, between lovers, between strangers, between film and audience. *L’Année Dernière à Marienbad* is a piece of persuasion; and the materials out of which it builds are those suggested by the setting itself: the quality of a dream hangs heavy over it.

Early in the film, half a proverb is quoted: “*De la boussole* (compass) *au navire* . . .” And half a proverb is literally what it is. Alain Robbe-Grillet has said that he made it up and didn’t bother to go beyond the few words he needed—anyone will think he’s heard it before, anyone can complete it for himself. This proverb is not wholly irrelevant to the film. No picture could be more fully realised, less of a do-it-yourself kit for filmgoers, than *L’Année Dernière*; but it is a film which opens up perspectives, alternatives, and at the same time that it spreads them out before the filmgoer it also contains them. Think of a solution, and the film will probably have forestalled you; the meanings will be there, the clues offered, yet when you get to what seems to be the centre of the maze, there’s still another path, and another . . . The meaning of the film is not, I would suggest, in some aphorism—the second half of the proverb—which you can bring out of the maze with you, but in this process of exploration, this containing of possibilities. Objective explanations can be sought but not imposed. We are being given not a comment on ‘reality’ but a series of mirror images, with the idea that this is how we apprehend—not reality, for that goes beyond the film’s definition, but whatever it is we apprehend. And the involvement, finally, is in a shared dream: “Once again I walk, once again, along those corridors, across those *salons* . . .”

LA NOTTE

GEOFFREY NOWELL-SMITH

NEO-REALISM AT ITS PUREST, in De Sica, Visconti or De Santis, set out not only to describe life but to interpret history. But history refused to be rewritten, the revolution did not materialise, and neo-realism petered out. Antonioni is the inheritor of this failure. The elegant formal patterns of his films are not arbitrary, but the expression of the revolt of creative intelligence against reality—the reality of a historical situation which it needs more than a simple faith in God, Marx or Freud to interpret and criticise.

In *Rocco* Visconti brought his characters out of the world of conventional neo-realism into a new situation. Abject poverty gives way to comparative affluence, but whereas poverty creates its own conditions—attitudes to problems of religion,



"La Notte": the party sequence.

marriage, sex, crime, social status being crystallised in a way of life determined by economic necessity—affluence breaks up the pattern; and the traditional moral standards of Visconti's peasant family come into inevitable conflict with their new way of life, with tragic consequences. The rich of Antonioni's films, filling in time "between the last coffee and the first apéritif" (Pavese), are in an aggravated version of the same predicament. A life which presents, instead of a fixed system of moral values, an unending series of apparently equally frivolous choices, is theirs by acquisition. But the solutions they have inherited from earlier generations are not adequate to their new condition. The world of their private thoughts and feelings is out of step with the world of material and scientific progress, and their attitudes to questions of personal relationships, sex and the condition of women, beneath a superficial modernity and much talk of the "Scandinavian solution", are geared to another, older way of life.

Other artists, including Pavese, have used the same background for a similar investigation of more general problems, and like Antonioni treated of suicide as a possible answer to the frustrations of existence. In Antonioni's films, for suicides and survivors alike, the ultimate problem is the same, the inevitability of solitude. Against a background of alien townscapes and a hostile nature—a parallel rejection of progressive and romantic dreams—his characters stumble uncomprehending from crisis to crisis. In an alienated world communication becomes impossible; and love, the only antidote to solitude, is a momentary passion, without communication, bringing transitory happiness. Only the lingering sense of a

hope that is occasionally and briefly fulfilled relieves the blackness of this pessimistic vision.

For us, however, spectators and not participants in this impossible existence, it is Antonioni's artistic sense and his profound feeling for physical beauty that provide the relief. We see the ideas incarnated in the form of a certain style, and respond to a development of the ideas across the development of the style right down to the last details of cinematic technique. In *La Notte* the technique increases in scope to carry a weight of generalisation new in Antonioni. His earlier films had a linear flow which was due largely to the fluidity of his camera movement, and his absolute rejection of cross-cutting and cut-away shots. The positive advantages of this style, which was carried over, with modifications, into *L'Avventura*, are retained in *La Notte*, but the montage has become crisper and cross-cutting is admirably (and unconventionally) used to break the flow and give a sense of abstract duration or sometimes a sculptural finality to the images. Many of the shots however still bear the traditional Antonioni trademark—dialogues with characters looking out of frame, abstract compositions of glass and concrete with a minuscule human being lurking in the background, reflections in water or in glass, wide pans which lose people and pick them up again. All these are parts of Antonioni's cinematic vocabulary and serve a clear expressive function. At their worst they are merely neutral features of language: at their best, as in the first shots of Monica Vitti and an unexpected track back from the face of Bernhard Wicki at a moment of crisis, they display an unpredictable genius equal to that of Welles.

The credit-titles come up against the background of an aerial shot of Milan taken from inside the lift of the Pirelli skyscraper. The camera tracks down, accompanied by a series of harsh, unrelated electronic sounds, and the city seems to rise up from the ground and engulf the camera. From this moment on the city, with all that it throws up by way of human and material flotsam, allows the characters no respite. More than a background, or (as in Bresson) a subjective emanation of the characters' spiritual condition, the landscape becomes a protagonist in the action and a co-actor in the human tragedy. Traffic piles up in the streets in a chaotic symphony of claxons: in a slum quarter a child cries and won't be comforted. Out in the *periferia*, on a wasteland, two men fight each other for no given reason: rockets are let off in a cornfield and sizzle up into a featureless sky. In an almost empty night-club a coloured woman does a striptease that is mechanical to the point of obscenity. All these are accidents of the city, but they act upon the characters, or are simply observed by them, and acquire in the process an explicit role in the development of the story.

The story is told allusively at first, with frequent background interpolations. It is only later, after a great many external impressions have been sifted and assimilated and the characters have defined themselves in their situation, that the film acquires its full concentration and intensity. Giovanni Pontano (Marcello Mastroianni), a successful young novelist, and his wife Lidia (Jeanne Moreau) pay a visit to their friend Tommaso, dying in a modern hospital in the skyscraper quarter of Milan. To Giovanni Tommaso is just a colleague: to Lidia, it transpires later, he was a great deal more—a man who, some years back, had loved her, unlike Giovanni, without egotism, and whose love for that reason she was unable to return. For the moment the style is impressionistic, holding the characters at a certain distance, and we catch more than anything else the tense, uneasy atmosphere of the visit, and a feeling of frigid luxury about the décor. The impression is significant. In the same hospital, in a room which is a replica of the one in which Tommaso is dying, a girl—a nymphomaniac—is being slowly and methodically reduced from animality to nothingness. When Giovanni leaves alone, after Lidia, he is waylaid by the girl, and in a hallucinatory and horrific scene, which gives full expression to Antonioni's

contempt for the complacent weakness of the Italian male and to his protest against the denaturing of human feeling, yields feebly but involuntarily to her violent assault.

Giovanni finds Lidia waiting for him, dwarfed against the great concrete wall of the hospital, and in a brief dialogue in the car, during a traffic jam, confesses to this first infidelity. Her reply is calm, lucid and ambiguous. "It doesn't change anything." But of course it does change something. However much—or however little—she may feel she loves her husband at that moment, she is going to be affected, and will eventually be forced into a complete revaluation of her life with Giovanni. She escapes from a smart cocktail party given to celebrate the publication of Giovanni's new novel, and begins a long, distracted wandering about the streets alone. Does she just want to be by herself for a bit? Or is she half hoping, at least subconsciously, for a sexual encounter that will in some way reassure her of her quality as a woman? Camera movement gives way to montage at this point, an evaluative montage of great precision and beauty. The images themselves are neutral, objective and flat—like the mysterious images of a dream translated into the cold formulae of a civil service report. She sees, successively, a child, men fighting, the rockets, images which on their own would be meaningless and incidental. It is the montage which gives them meaning and duration. As they succeed each other they evoke in her all her unsatisfied desires of maternity, sex, independence. Her estrangement from Giovanni becomes patent, and in the abstraction imposed by the montage and the indetermined locations, seems both inevitable and absolute.

Her wanderings take her outside the city, to Sesto, and here the memory, barely mentioned, of the days when she and her husband used to live there together, afflicts her with a nostalgic sense of her present solitude. She sends for him, but re-crossing with her the once sympathetic landscape arouses no response in him. They return to Milan. The deadened intimacy of a bath scene, without the slightest quickening of sensuality (though she continues throughout this episode to try to reassert the attraction she once had for him), gives way to the mechanical frigidity of the night-club, before they set out together to an all-night party given by an industrialist, a rich, pretentious pseudo-Olivetti with a taste for tame intellectuals.

The succeeding sequences in or around the house of the industrialist, even out of context, are a prodigy of pure *mise en scène* comparable to the best moments of *Le Amiche* (but infinitely more sustained) and to the search on the island in *L'Avventura*. The rhythm accelerates as the film takes up the weight of significance acquired in the earlier part. The slow discovery of the differences, now explicit, that separate the couple has created an emotional tension which is maintained and intensified by the *mise en scène* as they play out, separately, the penultimate acts of their common drama. The appearance of the enigmatic Valentina, daughter of the industrialist (Monica Vitti), the news of Tommaso's death and Lidia's active reaction, then the confrontation of the two women: all this is plotted into a complicated texture of cross-cutting, camera movement and movement within the frame. Attitudes are reversed. Lidia despairingly incites Giovanni to flirt with Valentina, to force a clean break, and leaves the party in a sports car with a young man called Roberto. As Giovanni pursues his cat-and-mouse flirtation with Valentina, the car with Lidia and Roberto in it crawls slowly through the streets, stops by a hotel, then moves on. The dialogue is unheard; the faces, isolated from the world by torrential rain beating on the windscreen, almost invisible, but we feel the significance and finality of her decision. A night of love is no solution to the problem. Life has gone on before and will go on after. Lidia will return to Giovanni.



"La Notte": Jeanne Moreau and Marcello Mastroianni.

But the film is not over yet: the series of agonising *prises de conscience* receives a last twist which seems to draw out the agony interminably. Out on a golf course, just within earshot of the cool jazz being blown across from the party, Lidia reads Giovanni a letter he once wrote to her and which he has now forgotten. The slow rhythm of the cutting freezes the couple against a grey dawn, as they resuscitate the truth about the past. Giovanni pushes Lidia down on to the grass, trying, since words have no sense, to convince her by violence that passion can still be revived. Slowly she yields, trying alike to recall a god that has deserted them and to re-create a communication that has long been impossible. The camera tracks obliquely away.

* * *

One could still feel, at the end of *L'Avventura*, that a reconciliation was possible between Sandro and Claudia, that even though the first violent instinctive passion was dead, a certain "mutual pity", as Antonioni himself defined the situation, would somehow carry them through. For Giovanni and Lidia no such hope is possible. One by one Antonioni dismisses the possible solutions and evasions of the problems. Another myth has fallen, he said apropos of *L'Avventura*, the myth that self-knowledge is sufficient. Lidia knows that Giovanni no longer loves her, perhaps never did, and by the end knows also that she no longer loves him. He for his part refuses to admit what he knows to be true. His dependence on her condemns them to years of living nominally together, dead from the neck up, and probably from the waist down as well. But both, independently, reject the alternative of separation and of the further choice it brings between solitude or hitching up with someone else, Giovanni perhaps to play the intellectual communication game with Valentina, Lidia to become the mistress of some nonentity. So long as the last thread holds they cannot leave each other.

The sculptural effect of the harsh lighting and of the montage, the accuracy of the detail and the pitiless objectivity of the style, give *La Notte* an impression of necessity even more rigorous than in Antonioni's other films. Giovanni and Lidia become a "case", and seem (unlike Sandro and Claudia in *L'Avventura*) imprisoned in an implacable determinism, inexorably frozen into their impossible Italian Attitudes. But too much is in doubt throughout the film, too much is consciously ambiguous in the dialogue, the contingency of the situation too apparent, for us to treat the film as an essay in doctrinaire pessimism, an exposure of the bankruptcy of feelings in an alienated world. And the horrifying revelation, for the characters, that love does not exist, is true only for them; but for them in their situation it is true absolutely. This limited necessity within the artistic framework is the object of the art we call classical, and in this sense *La Notte* is a classical film. It is also classical in its refusal to admit any falsely emotional mystification. The absence of theme music; the sparing use of close-ups, and then only as part of a series of movements; Antonioni's autocratic direction of the actors; and above all the terrifying lucidity of the characters themselves, are all classical features whose effect is to stimulate the mind rather than play on the emotions. And yet as the film pushes deeper and deeper into the desperate ambiguities of human feeling, our emotions are none the less inevitably engaged. Intellectual convictions that it would be so much better if people were only sensible about



Antonioni at work on "*La Notte*" in the streets of Milan.

sex, as much as sentimental feelings about the beauty of romantic love, are brushed roughly aside, and replaced by the *angoisse* of those to whom our various liberal and conservative solutions seem only evasions. But at the same time we know that, for their part, they too have been guilty of the same evasion, and we pity them for it, as we pity the heroes of Aristotelian tragedy.

After two thousand years we have made some progress from where Aristotle left off, and it should be said, in fairness to Antonioni, that the Aristotelian interpretation does not really fit. Compared with *L'Année Dernière* of Resnais, which presents reality as an infinite series of possibilities, all equally present and equally real, *La Notte*, in its attempt to make intelligible order out of chaos, seems excessively conventional; but this is an illusion. The order it presents so perfectly is not absolute. It is a provisional construct which requires perpetual re-creation; and in the contemporary cinema Antonioni seems the only person who can do this, both construct the edifice, and renew it constantly from film to film.

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INTELLIGENCE
UNIT**

How is Britain's proposed entry into the Common Market likely to affect our film industry? The subject is under discussion, notably by the film trade organisations, and was aired in a recent series of letters to "The Times". SIGHT AND SOUND has asked an independent organisation, the Economist Intelligence Unit, to report on the facts.

THE FILM POLICY of the Common Market countries is still at the shooting stage. A great deal of speculation is going on about what version will finally emerge from the cutting room, but this is something on which no one can yet be sure. If, as at present seems likely, Britain joins the Common Market early in 1963, the British film industry will almost certainly find itself faced with a still fluid situation, which it can play some part in shaping.

The reason for this fluidity is, basically, the intrinsic dual personality of the film industry. The cinema *is* an industry; but it is also an art. Should it or should it not come within the scope of the rules imposed by the E.E.C. in matters of tariffs, quotas and subsidies? This is no mere theoretical question, for in most of the Six countries—as in Britain—such devices play an important part in preserving the very life of film production. For films, as with agriculture, a careful balancing of needs is necessary, probably involving negotiations over a long period of time.

The first attempt at a Common Market colloquy on film policy was made in Brussels last February, when representatives of the industry from the Six countries met to discuss the main issues at stake. The statement published after the meeting revealed a measure of agreement on such matters as the need to persuade European bankers—said to be interested—to set up a common film fund for cheap loans. The delegates recognised that direct subsidies could not, under the Treaty of Rome, remain for ever, but added a rider that the abolition of subsidies must be combined with the abolition of taxes on cinema seats and that distortion of competition can occur just as much through taxes as through aids. Discreetly, little mention is made of differences of opinion; though the communiqué ends rather charmingly with the declaration that it was felt to have been a good thing to have met together "even though in the face of winds and storms."

This is plain indication that agreement on details is still a long way off. Prediction of the future is made even more chancy by the fact that the three dominant film producing countries in the Common Market—France, Italy and Germany—are all in the process of revising the nature and extent of the outside support which their industries receive. And the changes envisaged by the different participants are

in two totally different directions—towards an increase, or at least a reorganisation of support, on the one hand; and, on the other, towards its gradual reduction. The followers of both roads claim that theirs is the best way of achieving the Common Market aim of evening the odds all round—provided of course everyone else takes the same road, or agrees to meet halfway coming from the other direction. It is all very confusing.

The confusion has helped to make some people in the British film industry even more anxious lest, on joining the Common Market, we should find ourselves swept into a general movement towards the reduction of aid. This we could ill afford: in 1960 money earned by the distribution of British films at home and abroad totalled £14.8 million, while the sum paid into the Production Fund (the statutory means by which producers obtain a share of box-office takings) was £3.9 million.

Yet it is worth banking on the fact that the French and Italian industries, in particular, are unlikely to cut away the ground from under their own feet, even though the French are at present marching rather self-righteously under the banner of Article 92 of the Rome Treaty—the one which prohibits the distortion of competition by state aids—towards an abolition of direct aid to films by 1968.

It is bound to be admitted that if the French system counts as state subsidy then so does the British Production Fund. The French method, like ours, is to exact a box-office levy which is awarded to producers in proportion to their films' earnings. (In France foreign earnings are also included and awarded at a much higher rate, but this is largely compensated for by the reluctance of French producers and distributors to reveal to the State just how much money they have brought home from distribution abroad.) An additional source of supply to the French film fund is a tax on all French-speaking films—which of course includes dubbed foreign pictures. This source provided only 4 million NF in 1959, compared with 75.25 million from the box-office levy. A total of nearly 80 million NF, or £6 million, was therefore available for the French film industry.

The reasons given for the phased abandonment of this form of aid are several, one being that it over-stimulates production and encourages producers to run up debts. The Rome Treaty is another reason; it is pointed out that the Film Fund contains an element of Government subsidy because it is exempt from income tax. It could also be argued, but does not appear to have been, that a box-office levy which operates indiscriminately on all films is in fact unfair on foreign films (mostly of course American) because they gain nothing from it. The same could of course be said of the British Fund.

There is a growing body of opinion which holds that the French will not in fact go the whole hog in abandoning a box-office contribution, particularly as they, along with other continental film industries, have not yet felt the full force of television competition as it has already been experienced here. But it may prove wise to have reduced the rate of the levy, which was heavy enough to deter cinemagoers.

The French move is a significant one, if only immediately for its influence on the other Common Market producers. In the long term, the most important aspect of the French changes (introduced at the end of 1959) is the introduction of subsidised loans. These are of two kinds: both producers and exhibitors may get state loans at a maximum rate of 5 per cent., while high quality feature films will be awarded a free loan after completion. Prizes are available for short films. Clearly the extent of support provided in this way depends on the interpretation put upon the regulations.

In 1961, the second year of the reduced box-office fund in France, the aids allocated in advance from this fund totalled £3 million, compared with the British levy in 1960 of £3.9 million. But this aid was shared between studios and film equipment industries, so that the total paid straight to the producers was considerably less, though indirectly producers' costs should have been kept down by using subsidised facilities. State loans allocated, comparable with the money lent in this country by the National Film Finance Corporation, totalled about £1.7 million—the NFFC in 1960 lent about £1 million. Then there were also in France the free loans to quality films—in 1961 about three-quarters of a million pounds (9 million NF) was available for this purpose.

In the total volume of financial aid the French film industry stands at this moment almost on a par with the British, though it is of course at present travelling in the direction of much reduced aid. A comparison of the precise degree of support in relation to such items as production costs cannot be made, though it must be remembered that in 1960 the French made 124 full-length features (including co-productions, which of course also qualified for support) compared with the British total of 86*.

The Italian industry, comparable in size with the French though with a slightly stronger emphasis on co-production, is alone in the Common Market in enjoying a growing home audience. New cinemas are actually being built. Nevertheless the aid it receives now has more of the genuine subsidy about it, as well as being larger in volume than that of either France or Britain.

The total subsidies allotted at the beginning of 1961 to Italian film producers and associated industries amounted to over £7 million. There is no equivalent to the Production Fund in Italy; the money came direct from the government, though it is fair to remember the relatively heavy tax—25 per cent. on average—levied on Italian cinema tickets. There is also in Italy a compulsory seven-year deposit of £3,200, without interest, levied on dubbed foreign films, which provides an important source of aid to the Italian industry—aid which by its nature is more discriminatory than that given in France or Britain.

State guaranteed loans and a government dubbing grant of about £300 per film (aimed presumably at encouraging exports) round off the picture of Italian film support. But the whole system is at the present moment under review. Intense lobbying is going on, particularly against the cinema admission tax, which it is felt should certainly be cut if aid is to be reduced. It remains to be seen whether the Italians will be influenced, as they were doubtless intended to be, by the French lead in revising their system away from direct subsidies—or whether they will mark time until a clearer Common Market policy is formed. Either way their attitude will be crucial.

*There were also 36 British second-features, running between 50-65 minutes; a type of film seldom produced on the Continent.

Passing over Belgium and Holland, which both offer a degree of aid to films but which together made only a dozen pictures in 1960, we come to Germany. Here film production is in a poor way financially and artistically, never having recovered from the years of Nazi suppression. Hitherto virtually no state aid has been available, the nearest thing to it being bank credits guaranteed by the provincial governments and a few prizes for good films—in 1961 the best of these was not awarded as nothing came up to standard. But now the German industry, having simultaneously lobbied its Government for more aid and its Common Market colleagues for a reduction of theirs in the name of free competition, has had a victory at home. The central government has agreed to give support to the extent of about £1.25 million a year. The form has not been agreed, but might be an extension—i.e. a debasement—of the existing prize system. If, on the other hand, Treaty of Rome orthodoxy is adhered to, the aid might only emerge as more guaranteed loans.

Whatever the agreed level and form of aid eventually arrived at within the Common Market, it is likely on present tendencies to include an increase in facilities for cheap loans. Moves are already under way towards forming a single European film credit bank, which would probably look much like a blown-up form of our NFFC. If box-office levies are banned, they will almost certainly be replaced by lump sums given perhaps as "prizes". The truth of the matter is that all concerned with the cinema in Western Europe are well aware of the growing threat of television, and are not going to become martyrs to a Common Market creed. Britain would certainly not be forced to abandon aid altogether: a reshaping of the form in which it was given might however be required.

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What of the other prop to the British film industry, the quota which allocates some 30 per cent. of screen time to British productions? This does not at present take much of the weight. Most cinemas show considerably more British films than they need by law—the average is probably about 40 per cent. Until British audiences get more used to dubbed films, the proportion of foreign language first features on general release is unlikely to rise appreciably in relation to the whole.

Common Market rules forbid quotas on imports from fellow-members. (A screen quota is of course an import quota one stage removed.) All the Common Market countries still impose quotas on foreign films in one form or another; France for instance allocates a certain number of first features

Internationalism in action. "On Friday at Eleven" is a West German-French-Italian co-production, with a British script and international cast. In the still: Ian Bannen, Nadja Tiller, Peter van Eyck, Rod Steiger and Jean Servais.



to each of the main exporting countries (the British allocation has never yet been fully taken up). In Italy, the screen quota, a compulsory hundred days a year for Italian films, is less of an obstacle to the foreign producer than the deposits for imported dubbed films.

At the Brussels meeting, the unorthodoxy of quotas was acknowledged, but the question of what action to take seems to have been one of the stormy elements on that occasion. The whole quota business is a good deal more important to the present Common Market members than it is to Britain. Generations of cinemagoers on the Continent have been raised on Hollywood productions: neither subtitles nor dubbing are regarded as anything out of the ordinary. The foreignness of a film is scarcely any bar to its success among Continental audiences.

Proportion of gross film takings

Country of showing	Country of Origin				
	France	Germany	Italy	U.S.	U.K.
France 1959	%	%	%	%	%
(Paris only)	52	3	2	32	4
Germany 1960	9	40	5	30	5
Italy 1960	3	3	41	46	5

The classifying of Franco-Italian co-productions as French in France and Italian in Italy disguises the extent of interchange between these two countries; the table nevertheless makes two important points. These are, first, the continuing dominance of American films and, secondly, that British films do as well as or better than those from other European countries when competing directly in third markets on the Continent.

All big film-making countries rely increasingly on a world market. Britain is no exception: in 1960, £6.3 million was earned by film exports, compared with gross distributors' earnings at home of £8.5 million. Of the export total, over a quarter came from Europe.

Here, then, is the sound core of hope for the British film industry if this country becomes part of the Common Market. If a genuine "common film market" were established with no quotas, taxes or other impediments on the productions of fellow-members, the British industry could rightly expect, with properly directed effort, to increase its share of this market significantly. Though the West European market as a whole is, at very best, a static one, even relatively small inroads into the temptingly large slice still occupied by American films could bring worthwhile rewards. Of course the Americans would insist, as powerful outsiders, that the "common film market" allowed them in on the most favourable terms possible; their financial domination and the continuing dazzle of the American industry could hardly permit otherwise.

Alternatively, the Americans might well decide to increase their stake in Europe—including Britain—for example by more private co-production agreements. This could be something of a python's hug—a wholesale swallowing of independent European producers—unless sufficient precautions were taken. This is another very sound reason why the Common Market film industries are unlikely to dismantle their own built-in props until they are quite certain an adequate communal financial support system is available.

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In order to compete with the Americans in making large-scale pictures, *ad hoc* co-productions between companies in two or more countries, employing an international cast, are likely to become more common. The British industry should have a better chance of taking part in these if it is part of the overall capital and labour market formed by the Common Market. Whether more co-production agreements between governments of the Franco-Italian type will go on developing

is questionable. Such agreements are becoming more and more common in Europe; but a large part of their appeal lies in the fact that films so produced qualify for the subsidy, quota and other benefits of each participating country. If these were banished or equalised, there would be less point in co-produced films as such. Nevertheless, as Britain's ties with Europe become closer, there is no doubt that more British film-makers would want to explore the possibilities of teaming up with their colleagues on the Continent, and vice versa.

In this context, the scope of any formal agreements would be dictated largely by the wishes of particular producers. But no British producer could, or would want to, ignore the feeling among film workers—both actors and technicians—that closer co-operation with Europe involves a special threat to them. This fear is often misplaced, but has to be taken into account. It has two main ingredients. One is that British producers will be tempted to go off and make films in European countries using native labour at cheaper rates and in poorer conditions (Belgium is often cited as a country where the unions are practically powerless, though the idea of British producers rushing to exploit the facilities of the small and comparatively inexperienced Belgian industry is slightly absurd). This view ignores that part of the Treaty of Rome which says that labour conditions shall be evened up to the level of the best, or brushes it aside as empty idealism. No one would be so idealistic as to suppose that the European unions will not have to insist very hard on the implementation of this clause; but already working conditions in the French film industry are roughly comparable to British, and the Italians and Germans would be in a better bargaining position with the moral, and if necessary financial, support of their British and French colleagues. This aspect is sure to occupy a central place on the agenda of the meeting of British and other European film trade unionists in Brussels at the end of November.*

The British unions also fear that the attractions of working with European producers will reduce the number of films made in this country, and hence employment. They would in fact prefer inter-government co-production agreements, which contain the guarantee that no one country shall, over a period of time, play a larger part in the films made than its partner. It is likely that if a British producer wanted, say, to team up with an Italian to make a film with an Italian setting, the unions would press hard for a "pairing" agreement, whereby the same team made another film set in this country, employing British labour. There should not, in fact, be much difficulty in accepting safeguards of this nature.

Employment in the film world, unlike most other industries, is a question of obtaining the right ingredients for the particular job in hand. This can apply to technicians as well as star actors and directors. Continental producers and directors recognise the high standard of British film workers, and some have indeed said they are looking forward to the time when, if Britain joins the Common Market, the freeing of labour restrictions may tempt skilled British film men into Europe.

In all aspects of film-making, once we have become used to a situation where work "on location" can as easily be in Marseilles or the Black Forest as in Edinburgh or on Dartmoor, the whole situation expands at least as excitingly as when the wide screen first came upon the scene. Many related factors, such as standards of censorship, may gradually become affected by closer proximity to Europe. But, it is important to remember, a "Common Film Market" does not or should not mean a supermarket, with the same standardised products everywhere. As Britain and the Continental countries get to know each other better, genuine local flavour in films, as in food and wine, should remain something to be sought and relished.

*This article was written in early November.



Interview with

TRUFFAUT

LOUIS MARCORELLES

François Truffaut has recently completed his third feature, Jules et Jim, with Jeanne Moreau, and has also produced Claude de Givray's Tire au Flanc. We are grateful to France Observateur for permission to reprint this interview, with its revealing comments on Truffaut's own situation and that of the young French cinema.

MARCORELLES: One reads in all the papers these days that the New Wave is "finished". What are your feelings?

TRUFFAUT: It isn't so simple. Firstly, it can't be said too often that the New Wave isn't a movement, or a school, or a group. It's a quantity—a collective term devised by the press to group together some fifty new directors who arrived during a couple of years in a profession where previously there was never room for more than three or four newcomers a year. It's rather like what happens in publishing. Each year, an enormous number of first novels by young writers get into print; some never go any further, others carry on as novelists. This is the new thing in the cinema: it has become relatively easy to make a first film but it's extremely difficult to make a career as a director. If you bear in mind, though, that a dozen new film-makers are likely to turn up during the next three months, then you can't but admit the New Wave is still with us.

MARCORELLES: Then, as far as you're concerned, everything is going well?

TRUFFAUT: No, I'm fully aware that we're going through a bad period and that there are problems which must be solved. I put this down to the following paradox. The main effort of the New Wave has been towards freedom *vis à vis* the film industry. Films used to be impersonal because of constraints: use of foreign actors, too many screenwriters, distributors' pressures, top-heavy technical crews, over-extravagant budgets. We thought it should be possible to simplify all this by working

freely and making cheap films on simple subjects. A whole collection of New Wave pictures are alike only in what they reject: no extras, no theatrical intrigues, no expensive sets, no explanatory scenes. Often they have only three or four characters and very little action. Unfortunately, though, all this links up with a literary fashion which is currently irritating many of the critics and the smart public and which has been called Saganism. You know, sports cars, whisky bottles, quick love affairs. The intentional lightness of tone of these films is regarded—sometimes rightly, sometimes not—as just irresponsibility.

What makes it confusing is that the qualities of this new cinema—grace, lightness, modesty, elegance, speed—are paralleled by its failings: frivolity, lack of conscience, naïveté. And the result is that the films work against each other.

The paradoxical thing is that this effort towards a lighter cinema is bearing fruit three years too late, at a moment when the public as a whole is staying away from the movies and efforts are being made to win them back by offering them the most *solemn* productions ever made. We used to get a super-spectacle, Biblical or otherwise, about once a year. Now there's one a month. *Ben-Hur*, *Spartacus*, *King of Kings*; these are the films our little pictures are up against, and they don't stand much chance.

To sum up, the average so-called New Wave film has the following handicaps:—

People aren't going to go out to see something that looks like a TV transmission.

Because they reject complicated plots, the films may look like shorts stretched out to feature length.

The films only communicate to a section of the audience—

Above: François Truffaut and Jeanne Moreau.



"Jules et Jim": Oscar Werner and Jeanne Moreau.

or, rather, they don't mean the same to the man who's just dropped in to the cinema and the one who's already read articles and interviews about the film.

They don't do enough to camouflage the low budget conditions in which they're made.

They may try to look like a spectacle while breaking all the rules of the spectacular production.

MARCORELLES: Are these your own opinions, or are you speaking for the critics of the New Wave?

TRUFFAUT: A bit of both. Aesthetic considerations are what concern me most. I believe, for instance, that there are two kinds of cinema, one stemming from Lumière and the other from Delluc. Lumière invented the cinema to film nature or action (*L'Arroseur Arrosé*, etc.). Delluc, who was a novelist and critic, thought that one could use this invention to film ideas, or actions which have a meaning other than the obvious one, and so, eventually, move closer to the other arts. And the result is that you have Griffith, Chaplin, Stroheim, Flaherty, Gance, Vigo, Renoir, Rossellini (and nearer home Godard) in the Lumière camp, and Epstein, L'Herbier, Feyder, Grémillon, Huston, Bardem, Astruc, Antonioni (and nearer home Resnais) in the Delluc camp. For the first group the cinema is essentially a show, for the second it's a language. The critics, incidentally, have always had more sympathy with the Delluc division—understandably, since Louis Delluc is their patron.

MARCORELLES: Yes, but this cinema of spectacle, in the sense you're defining it, is often very carefully worked out.

TRUFFAUT: I'm trying to say that the first group make films with a kind of spontaneous or re-created innocence—trains arriving at stations, babies being fed, the *arroseur arrosé*—while the second are concerned, more deliberately and intellectually, with moral conflicts, characters who don't look at us while they're talking. I'm over-simplifying, of course, but not too much.

MARCORELLES: This is a distinction one doesn't often meet in histories of the cinema. But do you think it's just as true since the arrival of the New Wave as it was before?

TRUFFAUT: Well, it is becoming less true because people like Agnès Varda, Doniol-Valcroze, Chabrol are playing a kind of double game—Lumière-Delluc. But the New Wave has been so much criticised for being over-literary that I think it's fair to distinguish two main trends within it:—

(a) *The Sagan trend*: attempts to be more outspoken about questions of love and sex; self-portraits of artists or intellectuals; cultivated, well-off, apparently chilly characters. Some titles: *Les Cousins*, *La Récréation*, *Les Mauvais Coups*, *La Proie pour l'Ombre*, *Les Grandes Personnes*, *La Fille aux Yeux d'Or*, *Ce Soir ou Jamais* . . .

(b) *The Queneau trend*: attempts to explore an everyday vocabulary; unexpected and comic encounters between people who are generally working-class or a bit far out; a taste for mixing genres and shifts of mood; a kind of *rose et noir* (light and sombre) tenderness. Some titles: *Zazie dans le Métro* and *Un Couple* (obviously!), but also *Les Bonnes Femmes*, *Tirez sur le Pianiste*, *Lola*, *Une Femme est une Femme*, *Adieu Philippine*.

MARCORELLES: Where would you place Alain Resnais?

TRUFFAUT: His quality is surely that he escapes any classification. But all the same, let's imagine a third category which we could call the "Editions de Minuit" cinema*. There we could group together the films which correspond to the "new novel" and also those which have sociological aspirations, the "documents". Titles: *La Pointe Courte*, *Hiroshima mon Amour*, *Lettre de Sibérie*, *Moderato Cantabile*, *La Pyramide Humaine*, *Une Aussi Longue Absence*, *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad*, *Chronique d'un Été*.

I must repeat, though, that these classifications are pretty arbitrary. They may help us to distinguish more clearly the motives behind the irritation felt by people who run down the new cinema, but really it's only a game. Of course there are good and bad films in every category, every trend.

MARCORELLES: What do you think about the frankly hostile attitude of the distributors towards the work of the young film-makers? There has even been mention of a boycott.

TRUFFAUT: To be honest, their attitude is understandable, and I can't agree with those who talk of a boycott. All the big distribution companies—Gaumont, Pathé, Cinédis—have handled films by New Wave directors, while Cocinor-Marceau has really specialised in their work. So why speak about a boycott? At the beginning there was too much euphoria, then a kind of tempered euphoria, and now there's a good deal of mistrust. But there's nothing abnormal about this when one remembers that no New Wave film has been a real financial success for more than eighteen months—since, in fact, the showing of *A Bout de Souffle*. One must be honest about this. For the last eighteen months the film industry has been waiting for an unquestionable success, a film which would really click with both critics and public.

MARCORELLES: Do you think conditions might be made easier by the creation of a chain of independent, specialised cinemas to handle the more difficult films?

TRUFFAUT: It's not impossible, but on principle I'm against any kind of discrimination. Let's not forget André Bazin's admirable formula: "Films are born free and equal . . ." This isn't the case with books, so that a pamphlet by Klossowski published by the Editions de Minuit can't expect the same reception as a Sagan novel published by Julliard. But to demand the specialised cinemas for "difficult" films would be like someone going to the authorities to ask for his Star of David, seeking admission to the Ghetto. I was very struck by something Resnais wrote in *Le Monde* about *Marienbad*: "We wanted, with an objective which might be called commercial, to make a realist film which would get home to a wide public." This isn't an exact quotation, but the phrase is at the same time funny and fair.

MARCORELLES: It's true that in the case of *Tirez sur le Pianiste*, a good critical reception meant that you got a limited but satisfactory audience.

TRUFFAUT: The producers didn't lose a penny, but eight out of ten spectators were disappointed by the film. So, for me, it

* The firm Editions de Minuit publishes the works of Beckett, Robbe-Grillet, and many of the more experimental French writers, and also has a list of left-wing authors.

was a failure. It's not fair to expect people to waste their time—I really mean that.

MARCORELLES: People always say a film ought to please the public, but no one ever says that about a painting.

TRUFFAUT: If a painting doesn't please you, then you can look at something else. But the cinema is a show; you're shut up there, trapped, at the director's mercy.

MARCORELLES: Then, for you, there's something of the circus about it?

TRUFFAUT: That's a lot truer than you probably realise. My films *are* circus shows, and that's what I want them to be. I'd never show two elephant acts running. After the elephant comes the conjuror; after the conjuror, the bear. I even arrange an interval round about the sixth reel because people may be getting a bit tired. At the seventh reel I take them in hand again, and try to end up with the best thing in the show.

MARCORELLES: Are you joking or serious?

TRUFFAUT: I swear I'm not joking: I really do think about the circus while I'm working. I'd like people to boo the sequences that have gone wrong and clap the ones they enjoy. And since people who come to see my films have to shut themselves up in the dark, I always like at the end to take them out into nature—to the sea, or the snow—so that they'll forgive me.

At the Cirque d'Hiver, when I was a child, the show often ended with sheets of water over the track: it was a way of giving nature the last word. The rules I make for myself may be terribly naïve, but I hold by them and I try to improve on them from one film to another.

If you like, you could call my cinema one of compromise, in that I think constantly about the public, but not one of concessions, since I never put in a comic effect which I haven't laughed at, or a sad one which hasn't moved me. All the same, I'm not really enthusiastic about any of my films because there's always something important that went wrong. It's really not easy to put on a good circus show!

MARCORELLES: It's three years since you gave up criticism to become a film-maker. Have you changed any of your ideas about the cinema?

TRUFFAUT: At that time I was very conscious of the gulf between the cinema as I saw it and the cinema as practised by directors. Now I know that any film is abstract and even experimental, whether, like *Psycho*, it pretends to tell a story, or whether, like *Marienbad*, it doesn't even pretend.

The question which really interests me now is this. Should one continue to pretend to be telling a story which is controlled and authoritative, weighted with the same meaning and interest for the film-maker and for the spectator? Or ought one rather to admit that one is throwing on the market a kind of rough draft of one's ideal film, hoping that it will help one advance in the practice of this terribly difficult art?

MARCORELLES: One thing the directors who've come from *Cahiers du Cinéma* have in common, it seems to me, is a panic fear of anything which might seem to involve taking up an attitude to our present problems. Do you share this fear?

TRUFFAUT: Let me answer just for myself, not for my friends at *Cahiers*. In effect, I don't tackle the "problems of our time" in my films, and if I did try to tackle them I would be incapable of "taking up an attitude". It's a matter of temperament. The characters in a film really interest me much more than the story, so I can't make a film of ideas. Let's take an instance: I greatly admired Brecht's play about Hitler, but even if I had Brecht's genius I could never create a character as antipathetic as his Arturo Ui. But Hitler, like Napoleon, used to snatch brief periods of sleep while he was working, and I've read that he used to lie on a lumpy, hollow old mattress. It's a moving little detail, like anything about an adult which makes us think of his childhood. If I made a film on Hitler it would be appalling

because I'd be much too attached to details like this. These are the paradoxes of life. You know, for instance, that the Israeli agents weren't able to identify Eichmann until they saw him take home a bunch of flowers, and then found in their records that it was his wedding anniversary It's a fantastic irony.

But to make a fighting film, one would have to let man in the plural count for more than man in the singular, and I can't imagine doing that. On the other hand, I don't believe the artist working now has more of a duty to treat of his own time than artists in previous centuries. We're always between two wars, and I belong to a generation that's very pessimistic on this point. The idea of the "guilty conscience" is a useful one, but imagine Matisse's career if he had had this conscience. He was too young to fight in 1870, too old in 1914, a patriarch in 1940; he died at the end of the war in Indo-China and the beginning of the war in Algeria Well, to me these five wars he had no part in represent the frivolous events in a life entirely given up to painting flowers, women, glimpses of views from windows. He did good to other artists, good to men, good to himself. Why have I chosen Matisse and not Picasso? Well, he fits my argument!

But I don't want to try to dodge your question. The best of the permanent subjects is love, and so it's wrong to criticise the young cinema for talking too much about it. The best of the contemporary subjects is Algeria, which we're criticised for not talking about.

When a critic condemns a film for frivolity, though, when he says "there are more urgent things to bother with," I can't help feeling that if these things are urgent for us they are also urgent for him, and that perhaps he could be better employed. It's even more irresponsible, surely, to review an irresponsible film than to make one? In fact, in cases of this kind, the critic

(Continued on page 48)



"Jules et Jim", Truffaut's story of a girl and two artists.



"Innocent Sorcerers": Krystyna Stypulkowska.

FILM REVIEWS

INNOCENT SORCERERS and PARIS NOUS APPARTIENT

IF NOTHING ELSE, WARSAW and Paris have one thing in common: they both look alike at daybreak. The bare streets could belong to some urban, lunar landscape; on the horizon a louring sky meets the austere grey of the pavement; and on the pavement young men linger aimlessly or get into fast cars, dashing away at breakneck speed to escape some imminent crisis they know they wouldn't have the strength to face. It may seem odd to bring these two films together in a review. And yet in both the crisis comes at dawn, that disquieting, wakeful hour. They both deal in uncertainty—in that five-o'clock-in-the-morning feeling of present-day existence.

In Warsaw the day breaks after a night-long amatory game between two apparently bored young people. It is like some sophisticated French bedroom comedy situation, but turned mordantly in upon itself and with an up-to-the-minute tape-recorder by the side of the obligatory sofa. He is a sports' doctor able to afford such luxuries. His room—a bare hell's kitchen of one of the *Innocent Sorcerers*—is filled with cool, sleepy jazz. He loves jazz. When he plays his drum solo in a small amateur band the hot beat implies for him an escapist yearning. "In ancient times," one of the boys expresses it in words, "philosophers sought treasures and medicines. Now that they have found them, we, innocent young sorcerers, seek them in turn in order to kill our own hopes." But while killing them, our bored escapist still takes his music very seriously. Even his fashionable, self-induced lethargy must be conscientiously nurtured. It is this interesting duality, genuine care and nonchalant "What do I care?," which lends depth and urgency to Andrzej Wajda's picture once its faltering preface has given way to its night of trial.

The trial begins when the doctor picks up a charming and sophisticated young girl. She is like a kitten with a high school education

(indeed the intention at first, apparently, was that she should be revealed as a schoolgirl). They appeal strongly to each other. She misses her last train and has to spend the night in his room—the classic seduction situation. Too classic for them, in fact, for instead of yielding to their natural instincts they set out deliberately to mock them. Again he would like to play it hot, but because of an inhibiting constraint, camouflage for his insecurity, he plays it cool. Like Maciek with his dark glasses in *Ashes and Diamonds*, the doctor too has the confidence-building trappings of his way of life: peroxide hair, easy manner, a motor-bike, a little den of a room with its trophies and its photograph of Einstein. Yet he is actually as full of self-doubt as Maciek, as disinclined to come to terms with himself.

But morning is bound to come. The airy love game turns into a feverish strip-poker, culminating in an extraordinarily complex moment of guilt and shame, when the soul stands naked instead of the body. The doctor knows he loves the girl, but by now (despite the implausible happy ending forced on Wajda by his producers) it's too late. The game is over, the girl is gone, and in vain does he search after her on his motor-bike. In vain he searches after his real self. The circle of this one-act sketch is completed. It has only a single movement—a piece of cinematic chamber music set to jazz. Wajda composed it immediately after his sweeping, four-movement symphony to the past; and it is fascinating to see this director, whom we last saw losing himself in the romantic cavalry charge of *Lotna*, recapturing his own real self within a forty-minute scene in a bare room. *Innocent Sorcerers* is a relatively modest film, but one that hits a bull's-eye. Through script and playing (Tadeusz Lomnicki and Krystyna Stypulkowska) Wajda floods the room with a charged pathos which is entirely of today. He shows his anti-heroes as amiable, innocent, rebellious victims of a world-wide atmosphere impregnated with the fall-out of fear and nihilism.

Wajda's film is made with a journalist's eye and an alert awareness of this atmosphere. *Paris Nous Appartient*, the first feature of Jacques Rivette, a former *Cahiers* critic in his early thirties, attempts to pin down the atmosphere itself. The innocuous title suggests we are in for a New Wave fourteenth of July. In fact it uncovers a secret chamber, a mysterious, disquieting world of abrupt cuts, enigmatic faces and unfinished sentences, brusque fades and unanswered telephone calls. Everything, we feel, exists on a subliminal as well as a conscious level. This is one of the cinema's nearest equivalents to Kafka. On the surface the images are crisp and disciplined, the sequences simple like the sentences in a Kafka novel. But these images are merely floating above a sea of doubts. It is five in the morning again, and Chaos may have come by six . . .

Even the story has parallels to, say, *The Trial*, as a quest by sober reason into quicksands of mystery which it can never hope to penetrate, a quicksand which finally traps its heroine and all but swallows her up. Anne Goupil (Betty Schneider) is a student living in Paris who becomes involved with a group of hard-up, hopeful young actors, staying in town for the summer to stage a production of *Pericles*. But the production seems doomed by the tensions within and around it, by dissonant relationships and the indifference of the professionals in the cast. This tension feeds constantly on the unexplained death of a Spaniard who had composed a production score, since all the circumstances which led up to Juan's murder (or suicide) before the start of the film are now apparently repeating themselves for Gérard (Giani Esposito), the play's producer. Anne's growing love for Gérard impels her to investigate the mystery surrounding Juan's death, and she sets out to find the missing clue—a tape-recording of his composition.

But her efforts are futile. Not only does she fail to prevent Gérard's death, but her search involves her more and more deeply with a circle of bizarre, complex characters—Dark Powers behind the scene. Who are these Powers? A world-wide conspiracy awaiting the hour when they can seize power, an espionage network, or simply fantasy figures, creatures of the mind, liable at any moment to dissolve into the thin air of a sleepy summer Paris? We never find out. We remain to the end in a maze where both seeker and suspect are "tragic puppets"—in Rivette's own words—"sickened by the real world which they cannot reform." The world knows which way it goes, says one of these puppets, but it doesn't let us know. Bearings are lost, danger is real, whatever its source. "An unknown horror threatens," rants the paranoid American novelist exiled by McCarthyism, "and nothing can be done." And the immeasurable proportions of this horror, the terrifying irony of unknown dimensions, 57 megatons packed into a single warhead, has never been put on to film in quite this way. *Paris Nous Appartient* is a story rooted in the despair of its own time, in which the music of the Apocalypse comes from a tape-recorder and the Dark Powers descend into Hades in the latest Thunderbird.

This is a difficult film in that it is open to innumerable meanings and works on many levels. Also it is full of influences. To me its key lies in a speech by the idealistic Gérard, whose staging of *Pericles* is an ingenuously ardent challenge to the machinations of the Dark Powers. "We are life," he tells Anne. "We are those who reach out after a fatal secret." And Rivette speaks up for this life of the everyday, which he respects and records with humour: for the cheerful young Finnish model; for the pensioner alone in his hotel room; for eager young actors putting on Shakespeare: each and every one of them in the face of danger. They too are innocent sorcerers, unable any longer to believe they can change their destiny. And yet, in Anne's quest after the truth about Juan's death, Rivette is hinting at that intuitive, unavoidable spirit of human inquiry for reason, knowledge, cause in the face of imminent tragedy. The show—life—must go on, even if it seems vulnerable and futile. And the fusion of these ideas lends a disturbing beauty to the final image, when the diminished little group begins rehearsals afresh at a lakeside in a deserted country park. Swans float up and down the still water, stirring it with their wings. A symbol of calm, sober beauty or of continuing menace—whatever you want to make of it. But certainly an image of power and poetic quality.

Rivette realises this manifold concept with a firm technical control. The narrative is at first sight loose, like that of *Pericles*, but as Gérard remarks, "it all ties up in another place." The plot walks with tightrope assurance that narrow line where mystification ends and the demands of the thriller form begin. Well-observed as individuals, the characters also contribute to Rivette's picture of them as a microcosm of a world on the brink of disaster, with a dreamer, a seeker, victims, cheats and dupes. And in this context the figures themselves exist as enigmas—nowhere more compellingly than in the case of Françoise Prévost's destructive schemer, Cocteau's princess in a Sixties guise. Throughout, the complex interplay is managed with ease and skill.

Undeniably a rare film, one can still describe it perhaps in that less rare term of a revelation. For one thing, Jacques Rivette, unlike some of his more fashionable colleagues (Godard, Chabrol), has shown the courage it takes to remain disciplined. He gives us surface accuracy and trusts us to understand that there is far more behind what he shows. He has conscience and intellect; and he lives, breathes, understands our age of Fright Breaks and End-of-the-World demonstrations in Colour and Stereophonic Sound. He has captured some part of the essence of our times, almost like a last message in a bottle, floating in the sea.

ROBERT VAS

THE INNOCENTS

"THIS PERFECTLY INDEPENDENT and irresponsible little fiction," Henry James wrote in his preface to *The Turn of the Screw*, "this so full-blown flower of high fantasy." The adjectives are slightly—very slightly—self-deprecatory; James was fully aware of how enormously ingenious he had been with *The Turn of the Screw*, but he didn't perhaps want it to be too solemnly regarded. And it's this sense of cleverness, of a sleight-of-hand exercise performed, like all the best conjuring tricks, with the minimum of apparatus and that out in the open, which adds to the impact of this ghost story. The reader is so involved, the writer so dispassionately engaged in giving the screw another, decisive twist. Argue that James wasn't fully aware of what he was doing, that this is the Freudian ghost story written before its time and that the governess is terrifying the children by giving rein to her own repressions, and the plot details pull one back. Essentially this is a broad daylight ghost story, with the spectres appearing across sunlit lakes, on battlements, outside drawing-room windows on quiet Sunday afternoons.

It is not only James' rejection of supernatural machinery, and his decision that his ghosts should be all suggestion and no action, that makes this novel so difficult to film. Should it be done with all the emotional stops out, with the devoted governess struggling to save the souls of her threatened charges? Or as a firmer clash of wills, in which the children have moved far from innocence and the governess must fight them as much as Peter Quint and Miss Jessel? Or should it assume that the governess is less than blameless and that everyone except the placid Mrs. Grose is engaged in the same dangerous game? It's to the credit of Jack Clayton's *The Innocents* (Fox) that it turns down the first, and easiest, alternative in favour of the second, with some excusable hints of the third. But the difficulty remains: James gives us a narrator who is not a detached observer



"The Innocents": Deborah Kerr and Pamela Franklin.

but a participant; and he leaves her, as critics such as H. G. Wells pointed out to him, under-characterised. Her "relation to her own nature," he said, was too much to go into within his framework. Put the governess (whom the film calls Miss Giddens) on the screen, however, and one needs more. Deborah Kerr plays her with a good deal of sensibility, within the limits imposed, but all that "relation to her own nature" can't be ignored. She is our main witness, and how far can we trust her? Once the story is detached from James' artful context—a narrative within a narrative—the character is over-exposed.

These are the problems the script, by John Mortimer and William Archibald (adaptation) and Truman Capote (shooting script) intelligently faces. It is full of hints which anyone familiar with the novel will pick up, and anyone coming fresh to the film can easily disregard. The only real departure comes when Mrs. Grose (Megs Jenkins), before leaving with Flora for London, rounds on Miss Giddens with her own desperate accusation. But Mrs. Grose has earlier been given a wonderful line—"rooms used by broad daylight as though they were dark woods"—which catches the whole shuddering curiosity of their conversations about Quint and Miss Jessel. And her final fears prepare the ground for the climax, when Quint and Miss Giddens fight it out, in the centre of a ring of statues, for Miles' soul.

This last scene—in which Quint's clutching hand echoes the twisting hands of Miss Giddens which accompany the credits—is managed with full bravura effect: thunderous, lightning-lit, with desperate laughter from Quint. Generally Clayton brings rather a lot of weather to the business of the ghosts' appearances—sheets of rain, flapping curtains, thunder-claps mean less than that first, quiet glimpse of Quint, looking over the parapet with clouds dark behind him. His smile from outside the window, the black figure of Miss Jessel seen from across the lake or sobbing at the schoolroom table, the long shot, from high up, of Flora solemnly dancing in the little pavilion by the water, find the film at its most effective. But restraint falters in a sequence which begins with Deborah Kerr, clutching her candle, wandering along the night corridors, hearing her enemies whispering and laughing behind every door, and ends with a worked-up flurry of wild yells and whirling images.

The key to any ghost story is knowing when to stop, when to suggest without statement. *The Innocents* puts back some of the machinery James so carefully did without: the attic with the musical box, the creaking doors and cobwebbed stairs, the slow build-up, so that the audience knows a supernatural encounter is on its way. And

this fits in with the whole visual style of the film, which is one of elegant deliberation. Clayton doesn't, he has said, greatly like CinemaScope. With his cameraman, Freddie Francis, he sometimes uses a curtain or window bar to cut off the sides of the screen. But much of the time he relies on duologues shot in longish takes, one character in close-up, another hovering behind, the two manoeuvring during the scene and the camera following as they change position. The technique is poised, exact; though one may find oneself half a jump ahead, expecting a move before it happens.

The Innocents has ideas to play with: the house filled with flowers, so that a swirl of a crinoline sends the rose petals flying; the shifts in attitudes to the children (Martin Stephens and Pamela Franklin), so that their happiness in playing together gradually becomes a sinister opportunity for secret consultation; the juxtaposition of charm and corruption. A bush conceals a decaying statue, with a beetle dribbling from its mouth; and Miss Giddens, expecting to find Quint on the turret-top, encounters only Miles, fondling his white pigeons. On the sound track, a bluebottle buzzes, a slate-pencil squeaks; noises to play on the nerves. Yet, ingenious and apt as these devices are, effects which should be deft and easy too often come across as over-calculated. One is aware of effort as well as intelligence behind the film; and it's the cold daylight intensity of *The Turn of the Screw* that finally eludes this graceful, studied adaptation.

PENELOPE HOUSTON

TOO LATE BLUES and THE HUSTLER

TOO LATE BLUES (Paramount) is what happens when a film-maker of mingled gifts tries to match his talent for screen improvisation with the rigid demands of the front office. The result—as someone once said of Gershwin's attempt to wed classical music to jazz—is frankly a bastard, although here at least the parenthood is never in doubt. As producer, director, and (with Richard Carr) co-author, John Cassavetes is triply responsible for the film's style, and its partial failure seems the consequence of a calculated compromise. There were major problems to meet in telling the story of the corruption and possible redemption of a jazz pianist, most of them endemic to the theme. But they have been by-passed, rather than solved. For realism, Cassavetes substitutes a jaded romantic agony, and the hard edge of a possible poetry is destroyed by dialogue which sprouts from a naturalism gone soft. "I sold myself, man; but not my soul," snarls the pianist (Bobby Darin) after twelve months' service as a well-heeled gigolo. But such is the mood of the film that the "soul" he talks about might easily be a sharkskin tuxedo; washable, wrinkle-proof, and cherished mainly as a status symbol.

Cassavetes is knowledgeable about jazz, but what he offers is little more than a set of hip attitudes which embellish the plot without giving it direction. Darin plays the leader of a small, non-commercial combo (notable for the off-screen sax of Benny Carter) whose lack of courage—physical as well as moral—spoils the group's one big chance to make good. His weakness also transforms his mistress (Stella Stevens) from amateur tart into professional B-girl, and finally sullies his own whiter-than-white integrity. All, however, is not lost. In a finale of astonishing banality, Darin, the girl, and the group are reunited by the music they make together. Of course, it *might* conceivably happen that way. But the sermon against the Bitch Goddess has been delivered before and better, and one senses a perfunctoriness in the narrative, which suggests not only a readiness to please the backers (downbeat sex and an upbeat ending), but also a serious lack of anything more positive to say.

There are compensations, of course. In short takes, *Blues* has real vivacity and freshness. In a sunlit city park the musicians leave the bandstand marooned in a sea of empty benches to join a ball game, while the camera scuds around the field like a free spirit. In a recording studio the jazz that floods the room swells to a rare intensity, surprising the players and delighting them with their own invention. In a party sequence the conversation stabs and swoops through the company in rhythms as natural as drawing breath. All this is fine, but while a mirror is held up to life, the reflection is fragmentary. The shock of recognition occurs, but too seldom.

Felicity is not enough; the essential quality which *Blues* lacks is stamina. It keeps going, but only just. What one misses is a feeling of inevitability; the dramatic impulse which builds from the bone, and shunts character into action. Too much is arbitrary. Things happen not because they must, but because the camera angle is appealing (the face of a would-be suicide is seen through the plug-hole of a wash-basin), or because the plot needs a twist. The story is welded into shape, and out of true. (Viewed in retrospect, *Shadows* begins to look less like an original creation and more like a triumph of editing.)

The performances in *Blues* are curiously ritualised. Darin's jazzman is as smooth as a sugared almond, with only a random hint of the bitterness beneath the candy coating. Stella Stevens—a blonde hybrid, equipoised between the Monroe and Novak stables—translates what looks like nymphomania (it's hard to tell) into a beat variation of the Little Girl Lost. Only Everett Chambers as a jealous, Svengali-style agent acts out his quirks (impotent? homosexual?) as if they were natural growths, and not bizarre grafts on the darkening scene.

Admittedly, the surface detail (like *graffiti*) exerts a powerful, if dingy fascination. But it is drawn on a situation that is not only intrinsically sentimental, but also contrived. *Blues* is a long way from amateur's night, but the professionalism which might carry its faults and give it conviction is almost wholly absent. This is far from the case in Robert Rossen's *The Hustler* (Fox), a film which treats a remarkably similar central theme in a strikingly different way. The parallels are fairly obvious. *The Hustler's* hero (Paul Newman) is a professional pool player, as much an artist in his own way as Darin's piano player. His mistress (Piper Laurie) is a part-time writer who uses sex and scotch as anodynes to dull the hurts of a neglectful father and a lame foot. Like Stevens in *Blues* she is "lost", but with far more evident reason. And, like the agent in *Blues*, *The Hustler* also has its Svengali, a glacial big-time gambler (George C. Scott), whose covetousness is the pivot on which the story turns.

The difference between the two films is principally one of approach. Cassavetes, one feels, is developing a thesis, and much of his argument is tentative. Rossen is telling a story which he already knows from beginning to end, and each incident, each line of dialogue, has a precise job of work to do. There is no surplus, no slack, no room for experiment. The script by Rossen and Sidney Carroll (from a novel by Walter S. Tevis) is fast, compact, and true to the original. Its prime merit is that it knows exactly where it is going. There are no ambiguities. The mystique of the pool player is not merely presented; it is made plain. The sub-world of round-the-clock gamblers is not simply seen; it is inhabited.

The opening sequence of *Too Late Blues* is a school's-out session with the band making whoopee in a Greek restaurant. The overall impression (nothing important is *said*) is one of overwhelming winsomeness. The first half-hour of *The Hustler* is taken up with a big money match between Newman the challenger, and the reigning champion, Minnesota Fats (an immaculate study by Jackie Gleason). From the beginning, with Newman stroking the nap of the table like the fur of a cat, to the sweat-soaked end—twenty-five hours and eighteen thousand dollars later—the tension is used like a graduated series of electric shocks to reveal character, motive, and opportunity. Where *Blues* insinuates, *The Hustler* lays it on the line. If comparisons are to be drawn, it is relevant to note that



"The Hustler": Paul Newman and Jackie Gleason.

nine times out of ten Rossen's technique works, while Cassavetes—employing a much laxer style—scores approximately an equal number of hits and misses.

We come back to the question of stamina. Given fine performances by his three principals (incredible to think, after this, that Piper Laurie once played stooge to Francis the talking mule), Rossen orchestrates his film, dictating pace, mood, and meaning—always with the original conception in view. The result is that *The Hustler* goes the distance; its staying power is never in doubt. *Blues*, on the other hand, breaks its stride halfway home. The pace flags and interest dwindles. There is no question as to the talent of Cassavetes and his players, but all too often his film looks like a rehearsal for the real thing. The danger lies in allowing that this is it.

PHILIP OAKES

JUDGMENT AT NUREMBERG

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE? This line from the commentary of *Nuit et Brouillard* sums up the approach of Stanley Kramer's *Judgment at Nuremberg* (United Artists). For Kramer, the answer is: all of us, for Fascism existed because too many people, within Germany and outside, allowed it to flourish in their midst. Kramer's film, grappling solidly with its subject for almost three hours, presents all possible sides of the argument with an air of calculated high-mindedness. Into the gaunt Nuremberg courtroom in 1948, presided over by an American judge (Spencer Tracy), comes a parade of victims and persecutors. The four German judges on trial are confronted with some of the war's survivors—a simple-minded baker sterilised as a mental incompetent, a German girl tried for race pollution, and so on. Prosecuted by a fanatical American colonel (Richard Widmark) and defended by an equally eloquent German lawyer, the accused judges stand as symbols for injustices committed in the name of the German people.

The film is something of a culmination for Stanley Kramer, the self-appointed conscience of the American cinema and its main purveyor of big themes. When it is concerned with the courtroom hearings, Abby Mann's script provides material for all kinds of polemical argument; and the film assumes from its audience a certain knowledge of the period and an interest in legal procedure. Yet, as it progresses, the ambiguities steadily mount as well, and the image of Kramer the social thinker slowly dissolves into that of Kramer the resourceful showman, always able to produce a guest star from his hat at the psychological moment. Since he tends to give his players too much scope for self-indulgence, the results are not always happy. Montgomery Clift, embarrassingly mannered, never conveys the baker's tortured misery; Judy Garland, though coming nearer to terms with the pent-up emotions of the German girl, plays with strained solemnity. A sharper psychological truth can be found in the performances of Maximilian Schell, as the defence lawyer gradually beset by doubts about the validity of his case, and Marlene Dietrich, as the widow of a German general executed after the first War Crimes trial. Dietrich's finely shaded performance is the only truly European one in the film. When she proclaims herself as "a daughter of the Army", a world of German national feeling is suddenly suggested with implications reaching out beyond the film's sociological limits.

Kramer's methods as a director make heavy weather of the first half of the film. Trying to get away from the usual courtroom cross-cutting, he employs a highly mobile camera which glides around the speakers (sometimes in 360 degree pans), with an occasional zoom lens shot for emphasis. After many repetitions these devices look monotonous, and he has allowed himself too many calculated cuts and shadowy, symbolic close-ups. Yet this is a film in which the writer's ideas remain uppermost; and we are presented finally with something approaching a point of view—not a very original one, perhaps, yet somewhat unfashionable and a bit of a box-office risk. The film's accused German judge has confessed to his own vacillations, the American prosecutor has resisted a plea for political expediency (the period is that of the first Berlin crisis when the Allied services needed maximum German support), and the sentences are pronounced: life imprisonment for all. The officials and administrators who acquiesced and remained silent also had to pay the price, as well as the men at the very top. An end title adds a final comment, an ironic historical footnote: of the ninety-nine men condemned by the time the Nuremberg trials ended in July 1949, not one is still serving a sentence.

JOHN GILLET



"Too Late Blues": Bobby Darin and Everett Chambers.

In Brief

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S (Paramount) is a charming, rather cock-eyed, whimsical, fantastical, sentimental fairy story, with a whopping part for Audrey Hepburn. It is a modern fairy story, of course, with smartish, literate and often very funny dialogue (part Truman Capote, part George Axelrod), but it is a fairy story nevertheless, for the simple reason that Miss Hepburn is playing the lead—and Miss Hepburn is a fairy princess. The Modigliani head and neck are exquisitely poised above the Givenchy clothes and she sports the longest cigarette-holder since Harpo's in *A Night in Casablanca*; she has been married at fourteen and now she is painting the town red; we see her drunk, and in principle she should obviously go to bed with the beaux from whom she habitually claims fifty dollars for a visit to the powder-room (though equally obviously Miss Hepburn doesn't); yet, at the end of it all, we cherish her and weep with rapture when she finally melts into the arms of the kept young writer (George Peppard) who has loved her from the start and walked out on his rich mistress for Holly's sake. I haven't read the Truman Capote story on which *Breakfast at Tiffany's* is based, but if, as everyone says, its unhappy ending was right, it must have been a very different kettle of fish from the film. Miss Hepburn is a spellbinder and her personality so transforms the material that, whatever Holly may be in the story, in the film she remains a frightened innocent.

Further, the director Blake Edwards firmly propels the picture towards a happy ending. Holly's tireless pursuit of a green-backed husband and the ducks and drakes she plays with the young writer's affections *should* repel, but they don't because the director's sympathies are entirely with her. And the day that she and Mr. Peppard spend doing things they have never done before—in particular a scene, deftly and wittily scored by Henry Mancini, where they pinch a couple of masks from Woolworths—is handled with such lyrical closeness, and the New York backgrounds are photographed so prettily and with such affection, that there can be no doubt the two have fallen in love. The final coming together in a cloudburst—after a good deal of symbolic play with a no-name cat—is inevitable.

The episodes involving dope-rings and millionaires are presented in a mood of high fantasy, and most of the other characters are as fabulous as Holly herself: the rangy, middle-aged ex-husband, the courtly assistant in Tiffany's (John McGiver) and the toothily explosive Japanese (grotesquely impersonated by Mickey Rooney) in the apartment upstairs. And although Patricia Neal, as the writer's rich *patronne*, gives indeed a beautifully hard, glittering performance, she, in a way, is at odds with the film because, with her



"Bachelor Flat": Terry-Thomas and Francesca Bellini.

smart, possessive ways and ever-open cheque-book, she comes from the real world and is apt to make one feel that the whole thing ought to end squalidly.

The film doesn't finally stand up to detailed psychological examination; it can be faulted as a narrative and it doesn't take a serious moral view. But the people who querulously insist on such points have clearly not surrendered to Miss Hepburn's magic spell—and the good thing about fairy princesses is that you can take them or leave them.—JAMES BREEN.

PEACE TO JEAN-LUC GODARD, that ardent Tashlinophile. But his hero's **BACHELOR FLAT** (Fox), which has Tuesday Weld disrupting archaeology lecturer Terry-Thomas's steady love life on a seaboard campus, is a good deal funnier than *Une Femme est une Femme*. Funnier, though nowhere near as inventive: Tashlin's situations are if anything broader than ever. The first half hour is plodding bedroom farce, and even then it takes quite a time for Celeste Holm's elegance and dry charm as the lecturer's fiancée to help dispel the atmosphere of childlike prurience. Meanwhile one is gradually disarmed by the rest of the cast, and by intermittent flashes of what the French term *onirisme* and the *insolite*. Initiates into the mysteries of *onirisme* won't need me to point out the felicities of the lavender-hued dream sequence (Tuesday as a delinquent being chastised in a fictitious reformatory), and the apparently magic life taken on by inanimate objects like the gigantic dinosaur bone which a plucky little dachshund lugs down to the beach and hastily buries. For non-initiates, squares who can actually recall whole passages from *The Bride Came C.O.D.*, there's the predatory sunbathing lady who threatens to "scream like Bette Davis" and tensely invites Terry-Thomas to "kiss me where the lipstick is"; also the foolproof notion of turning Jekyll-Terry into Hyde-Thomas by plying him with unaccustomed drink, then letting him loose, trouserless and armed with a butterfly-net, among the sirens who have never ceased to batter at his door. Best of these is a new name, Francesca Bellini, an eccentric with the wobble of a sexy blanc-mange; although Tuesday Weld has enough fun with her impersonation of a fugitive from a reform school to suggest that Tashlin has acquired a talent for bringing out the best in unpromising players less apparent in his Jerry Lewis—Jayne Mansfield days. Richard Beymer strikes one for the first time as a resourceful comedy actor,

both in his role of juvenile lead and as a foil for Terry-Thomas; while the latter, given the red carpet treatment of DeLuxe Color-CinemaScope photography and tailored dialogue (by Tashlin himself and Budd Grossman, from a play by Grossman), is seen to happier advantage than in years of British so-called vehicles. Tashlin is by no means another Billy Wilder, but he has made a niche for himself in Hollywood comedy just the same.

PETER JOHN DYER.

POCKETFUL OF MIRACLES (United Artists). Frank Capra has earned the right to get away with what, from almost any other director, would look like murder. If he invites us to believe that a sizeable part of New York's underworld would postpone their carving up of crime empires to ensure an old Broadway derelict's reunion with her long-lost daughter, we are prepared to go along with him. If he disguises Hope Lange under blonde curls as a night club hoofer, tries to resurrect the Runyon world of speakeasies and soft-hearted gangsters, and uses the crippled, blind, deaf-and-dumb beggars of Broadway as a chorus, we are still acquiescent. But to be asked to take Bette Davis, *grande dame* of the gutter, boo-hooing over her gin bottle and her daughter's photograph; and to watch, in cold blood, the juveniles singing and reciting at each other, while mother, make-believe stepfather and loyal butler peep tearfully round corners at them—this is going too far. This decrepit fantasy of Broadway has brought out the maudlin streak in Capra at the expense of honest sentiment. What he has attempted, in fact, is the resuscitation of a film of almost thirty years ago, his own *Lady for a Day*, in its original post-Prohibition setting but with all the modern trappings. And, of course, it can't be done. The old dexterity flickers through scenes like the encounter with the Chicago crime king (Sheldon Leonard), touring New York for security reasons in a giant furniture van, and some of the exchanges between Dave the Dude (Glenn Ford), his henchmen, and the usual Capra collection of mayors, governors and police commissioners. A first sight of Bette Davis, tottering along Broadway, swigging at her bottle and yelling a comradely greeting after Tallulah, has its splendours. But even the cast, which reads like a roll-call of old Hollywood, has largely lost the knack, though Edward Everett Horton, the eternal butler, and Thomas Mitchell, the mellifluous con man, still manage to give their stock parts a lift. Peter Falk, too, knows how to play a Runyon character. But the film's slowness, its liking for long dialogue scenes shot head-on by a stationary camera, show how the old flexibility has stiffened up. One hopes Capra isn't tempted to remake *Mr. Deeds* and *Mr. Smith*; better to leave us with memories of that lost innocence.—PENELOPE HOUSTON.

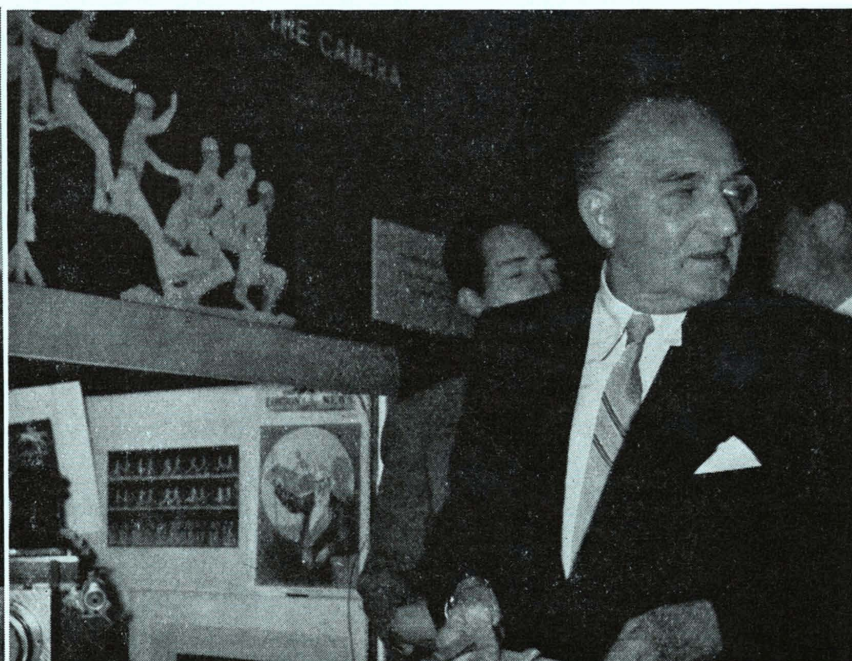
THE KNIFE (Mondial) which thirteen-year-old Thomas steals, nurses and almost uses on his mother is a symbol of assertion and sexual aggression. She is a widow with no other children who has taken the boy's tutor for a lover. Thomas himself is left adrift within his immediate society—a lonely girl, Toni, his own age with a sluttish mother, a housekeeper who gruffly cuddles him, a parson who is a bore and a cliquish troop of bullying, sex-charged Scouts. The end of the film finds Thomas packed off, still lonely and apprehensive in his brusque new crew-cut, to boarding-school—but not before he has heard a pathetic confession of weakness from his mother which decides him to bury his knife once and for all. It sounds like early De Sica but instead has the acerbity of early Bergman. The latter's (and Freud's) influence becomes only too explicit in a dream sequence all galloping horses, guns and father-figures: not to mention the tutor's habit of tapping, like Jarrel's Caligula, during a faltering lesson; a rape witnessed by Thomas which leads to him threatening Toni with the knife; and the sight of the mother debasing herself (in one of two clumsy slow-motion insets) at the feet of her drunken lover. These influences, and there are others, can't be said to help much, but the fact remains that this frequently acute and perceptive Dutch film is as compassionate towards its adults as it is unsentimental in its treatment of puberty. The boy, Reitze van der Linden, is tough and true; and though the director, Fons Rademakers, has less success with other performers (Ellen Vogel plays the mother as though her greatest domestic trial were the drains), he has a compelling, fascinated eye for small-town life. There is a very funny scene involving a fairground clairvoyant, one of desolate accuracy on a railway platform, and enough honesty brought to bear on an overworked and too often understated subject to alert one's interest in anything Rademakers may do in the future.—PETER JOHN DYER.

THE NINE LIVES OF DOCTOR MABUSE

John Russell Taylor

THE FIRST THING TO strike the casual observer about Fritz Lang's recent films is his apparent interest in returning to his own sources and going over his own past. His latest film, *The Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse*, takes up a line previously represented in his work by *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse* in 1933 and *Doctor Mabuse the Gambler*, one of his earliest works (or two if you count the parts as separate films) dating right back to 1922. Before *The Thousand Eyes*, he remade the *Tiger of Eschnapur-Indian Tomb* double-bill, based on scripts he and his then wife Thea von Harbou had written in 1919 with the intention that he should direct them. At that time they were overruled by Joe May, Lang's producer, who saw the story's potential and decided to direct the films himself; it was filmed again in Nazi Germany in 1937, while Lang was in Hollywood, and it was only the third time that he could carry out his original intention. Just after the Indian films it was announced that Lang was preparing a remake of *Die Nibelungen*, first filmed in 1924, and while he was making *The Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse* it was stated that his next project was a new version of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, which he prepared and almost directed in 1919 before it was instead given to Wiene.

Alas for theory, according to Lang himself, whom I met recently in London, none of this evidence means quite what it appears to mean. The Indian films, he says, he made entirely because he found in the producer's requirement—make a German film, any German film, which will cost \$5 million and therefore (*sic*) be an international success—a congenial and rather entertaining challenge; the subject obviously lent itself, so (The combined and truncated version shown over here as *Tigress of Bengal*, incidentally, he rejects out of hand as a travesty.) *The Thousand Eyes* was a result of the Indian films, in a rather devious way. After their success the producer wanted to follow them up with a remake of another exotic Twenties success, *Mistress of the World*. Lang rejected the idea on the grounds that our experiences of the last few years had made several basic plot premises laughable, so that audiences would no longer take the story. Undeterred, the producer advertised in the trade papers that Lang would be directing a new *Mistress of the World*; Lang denied it, and William Dieterle took the project over. Not at all worried by this setback, the producer then suggested to Lang a new *Nibelungen*. Lang firmly maintained that this was also impossible ("Where do you get the actors? As figures in heroic



Dr. Mabuse in his most recent incarnation. Wolfgang Preiss as the criminal master mind in a scene from "The Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse".

Above: Mabuse's creator. Fritz Lang photographed at "The Observer" Film Exhibition in London, 1956.



"Metropolis": Alfred Abel, master of Metropolis, in television contact with the labour boss.

legend how do they move, how do they speak? What sort of things do they say?"); but the producer again announced that he would do it and the announcement was again denied.

Finally, the producer came to Lang and told him that he had just bought the name of "Dr. Mabuse" from the executors of Norbert Jacques, author of the original novel, so what about a remake of *The Testament*? Again Lang at first refused. Gradually the idea began to bloom in his mind, set off by his reading, somewhere among the newly-published Nazi documents, of four hotels which were to be built in Berlin after a German victory to accommodate visiting diplomats of the subject states. In each room there would be a concealed microphone, so that at some central point the government could know exactly what was happening in any room at any hour. Extending the gadget to a concealed television camera, Lang found that the idea made a suitable jumping-off point for a new postwar Dr. Mabuse story, and went on to make it. This latest Mabuse film has been a great success in Germany, and the producer is now happily turning out numerous sequels (*In the Steel Net of Dr. Mabuse*, *The Invisible Dr. Mabuse*). None of these will be directed by Lang, he says in a tone which leaves no doubt of his determination this time.

* * *

So much for the idea of Lang as the great reviser, deliberately choosing to tie up the loose ends in his film career. He did not even, it seems, want at first to make *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse*, which the producer suggested to him as a likely money-maker in view of the success of the original films, and agreed only when he realised the possibilities the subject afforded for oblique comment on the Nazis and Nazism. But the point is that he did finally agree, as later with *The Thousand Eyes*. Certain themes run inescapably through his career from the beginning right up to date, and of them all that represented by Dr. Mabuse, which reaches its apotheosis and logical conclusion in the latest episode, is the most persistent and pervasive. It can be traced back, in a rudimentary state, to one of

Lang's very earliest films, *Die Spinnen* (1919), a series meant to be in four parts, though only two were actually made, about an organisation of international criminals bent on world domination with the aid of the lost treasure of the Incas. Here everything stays unmistakably on the level of popular adventure; but the fantasy of criminals conquering the world, common enough at the time, provided a germ which—fertilised perhaps by Lang's temporary contact with the mad Dr. Caligari and his strange power over men—was to blossom some three years later into *Dr. Mabuse der Spieler*.

Here the elements are all assembled for the first time: the master mind with megalomaniac inclinations who uses his massive intellect to foster crime, has, like Dr. Caligari, almost supernatural powers to hypnotise and hallucinate, and is in the end destroyed by his own genius—his mind can no longer take the strain and he is reduced to complete insanity by the phantoms his own brain can so effectively conjure up. At this stage the intention would not seem, on the surface at any rate, to be much more than a complicated and relatively intelligent thriller; and it is on this level that the film remains, even today, considerably more viewable than most from its period. Mabuse, though his talents are more impressive than those of the general run of master criminals, shares to a large extent their aims—power, riches, domination over a virtuous, attractive woman. He is, in other words, sane enough when he is sane, and his motives are comprehensible enough to the majority of his audience. Though a by-product of his activities is the terrorisation of society, we are never given clearly to understand that this is their primary aim. When the original programme-note (quoted by Siegfried Kracauer) speaks of how "Mankind, swept about and trampled down in the wake of war and revolution, takes revenge for years of anguish by indulging in lusts . . . and by passively or actively surrendering to crime," this seems to imply a comment on the sort of society in which a Mabuse is conceivable rather than a statement on the social intentions of the master criminal.

This interpretation might find support in the next appearance of the mad genius in Lang's work, the maniac scientist in *Metropolis* (1926). Admittedly he stands rather aside from the character's main line of development, but he has one or two features in common (apart from being played, like all of Lang's early master minds, by the ubiquitous Rudolf Klein-Rogge), including a monumental intellect, an inflated ego, and a strange power over those around him, embodied (literally) here in the shape of the false Maria, his monster puppet



"Spione": Gerda Maurus and (right) Rudolf Klein-Rogge.

devised to lead the crowd astray and provoke a state of chaos and anarchy.

But by the time we come to *Spione* (1928), the next film to take up the theme, Lang has clearly begun to see the place of the master mind in a rather different light. Where Dr. Mabuse originally had clearcut and relatively "normal" criminal aims which he was the better able to pursue because of the chaotic state of the world, Haighi, the criminal genius of *Spione*, seems to have no aim beyond the general disruption of society. Living, like Mabuse but more explicitly than Mabuse, in and on the confusions of the postwar world, he heads an international spy ring which appears to exist just for its own sake and to function in a void—no particular cause, even self-interest as it is usually understood, seems to motivate their actions. Mabuse's skill as a master of disguise is here permitted to a number of characters, with a consequent further blurring of distinctions. Nobody is ever quite what he seems, and the sheet-anchor of normality is absent. This time we have moved right into the world of crime, and when spies fight spies without our ever clearly knowing what, if anything, either side is meant to represent, it is not always easy to make out where, even in the most conventional terms, our sympathy should lie. Dramatic conflict proper tends to be replaced by the mechanical thrills of a series of brilliant technical set-pieces.

Lang himself would appear to have understood this when he came in 1932 to make *Das Testament des Dr. Mabuse*. At any rate in this film the anti-social aims of the principal character are made completely clear; and society is given a chance to answer back (if not very thrillingly) in the character of Lohmann, the jovial policeman (the equivalent of Wenk in the earlier film) who finally defeats Mabuse's forces, and in the two young lovers, one of them a rebellious member of the gang, who take up perhaps a disproportionate share of screen time before getting to their epic battle with bomb and flood in the last few reels. In *Das Testament*, we take up the story of Mabuse some little time after the end of the first film. In the asylum he has gradually started writing again, and little by little produced a complete plan for inducing global chaos by a progressive campaign of terror and destruction, culminating in the blowing-up of all power stations, gasworks and water-works, the disruption of transport and the systematic ruin of crops. Even when he dies, his work is carried on by Dr. Baum, head of the asylum (overtones of *Caligari* again), who has come under his hypnotic influence. Indeed at the very end Baum himself, reduced in his turn to madness, takes on completely the character of Mabuse and is locked away in one of his own cells.

If it seemed an incidental, almost accidental, characteristic of Haighi that as a crook he was strangely disinterested, involved in crime mainly for its own sake, with Mabuse in *Das Testament* this very lack of normal motivation is erected into a principle of life. The only aim of chaos is chaos, of destruction destruction. Lang in fact regarded, and regards, this film as a deliberate reflection, albeit oblique and distorted, on the Nazi party and its ethos, putting many of the Nazi slogans about the prime need for total destruction before a new world could be built into the mouth of the mad doctor, and permitting him, further, to will deliberately and explicitly what the Nazis willed only by implication: a new world of crime and disorder in which civilisation would be destroyed and mankind return to the condition of animals. "Thus I hoped," wrote Lang in 1943, "to expose the masked Nazi theory of the necessity to deliberately destroy everything which is precious to a people . . . Then, when everything collapsed and they were thrown into utter despair, they would try to find help in the 'new order'." Goebbels banned the film, of course, but according to Lang took a surprisingly sophisticated view of it. There was nothing wrong with the development, he said, only it needed a führer to defeat Dr. Mabuse in the end and save the world order from those who would destroy it by perverting the true ideals. This interesting idea of a *Dr. Mabuse Meets the Führer*

not holding any noticeable attractions for Lang, he saw the danger signals and set off forthwith for America by way of France.

The next ten years or so contain little of direct interest to our central study, though at least one of Lang's favourites among his own films, *Fury*. (The others are *M*—the absolute favourite—and among his American pictures *The Woman in the Window*, *The Big Heat* and *While the City Sleeps*.) But in 1943 comes *Hangmen Also Die*, his film on Heydrich scripted by Brecht (the subject was one they both found fascinating and suggestive), which takes on a special significance when one bears in mind Lang's remark that "Out of the Mabuses came the Heydrichs, the Himmlers and the Hitlers." In 1944 there is *The Ministry of Fear* (a wonderfully suitable title for a Lang film) in which we are back again, via Graham Greene, in a world where international espionage and mental instability are closely linked. (At the beginning the hero is just out of a mental hospital.) In these films the processes set



"Dr. Mabuse der Spieler": Mabuse (Klein-Rogge) with deranged and broken victim (Alfred Abel).

in motion in Lang's mind by the rise of Nazism seem to be working themselves out, and although *Hangmen Also Die* has wonderful sequences, like the oft-quoted one in the hospital near the end, with a nurse watching grimly over the ex-superman's dead body, they are not for the most part conceived on anything like the same level of imaginative intensity as their German predecessors. Instead, with the tide turning against Hitler and the urgency of that particular crisis daily diminishing, Lang chose to turn, virtually for the first time, to the superwoman as a substitute for the superman, the *femme fatale* who achieves by sheer sexual allure very much what the Dr. Mabuses achieve by the exercise of intellect and will power.

Lang himself has averred that it is not the superman *per se* that fascinates him, but the effect of the superman as a stand-in for fate in the lives of ordinary people. Nowhere does this seem nearer the truth than in Lang's American phase. (In the German films it is clearly not the whole truth, as far at least as the final effect is concerned, since the ordinary people who are suffering the superman inevitably emerge as much less colour-

ful and exciting than the superman they are suffering.) Fate takes various forms—the lynch mob in *Fury*, the social order stacked against the hero in *You Only Live Once*—and even if it suddenly appears as one man (Heydrich) or one woman (Joan Bennett in *The Woman in the Window* or *Scarlet Street*), the principle is clearly much the same: whatever it is, it is something outside the power of the ordinary individual.

Since those days, the raw plot material of Lang's American films has been very much in the normal run of the American cinema, with occasional hints of favoured themes—*femmes fatales* in *Moonfleet* or *Human Desire*, glimmerings of satanic intellect from the publisher in *While the City Sleeps* or the hero-villain of *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt*, varying degrees of mental derangement . . . But the real culmination of Lang's "thought" on the subject of the superman has been reserved for his return to the German cinema; until, in fact, *The Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse*. There are a number of overt references back to the earlier works in the cycle: from the first are borrowed the clairvoyant side of Mabuse's interests and his mastery of disguise, from the second come his strictly non-commercial aims in crime and the doubts they cause among members of his gang, as well as the idea of Mabuse's influence persisting after death through his writings and personality. (In the German version the new Mabuse is merely an interested person taking advantage of a newly chaotic world to put Mabuse's ideas into practice again; in the French, much to Lang's disgust, he has been turned into Mabuse's son.) From the Nazi side of the subject comes the conception of the hotel with "the thousand eyes". *Das Testament* is even specifically laid under contribution at one point, for the scene of the car murder, which is filmed very similarly, even to the famous shot from aloft of the car with the dead man at its wheel being left immobile in the middle of the road while traffic streams away all round it. This incident, in fact, is the one which first rouses suspicion as to whom the new master criminal might be. But in one particular the film pushes the reasoning of the earlier works even further, to its logical conclusion: while Mabuse in *Das Testament* merely seeks to reduce human civilisation to primal anarchy, the later Dr. Mabuse plots for no less than to gain control of the major atomic factories in the world. And why? What good will it do him? None, he admits in the key scene of the film, except to

give him the ultimate pleasure of putting his finger on the button and returning the whole world to the scattered atoms from which it was made. Destruction for its own sake can go no further.

* * *

Even though this steady, logical progression from *Die Spinnen* to *The Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse* does exist, and provides one thread of continuity running through Lang's work, it is finally only one of several, and by no means the most important. To concentrate upon it without qualification would suggest that Lang is a "philosophical" director, either in the naive British sense in which a film-maker can earn the title simply by introducing, say, the same sort of social problem into all his films (Lindtberg, Zinnemann, De Sica—*de leurs meilleurs jours*, of course), or in the more sophisticated *Cahiers du Cinéma* sense. But this, really, he is not: he makes films with ideas rather than films of ideas. As he remarked recently, "I live through my eyes," and in the end it is his power to embody his ideas visually which accounts for the lasting effect of his films. The main conflict in them is not primarily on the intellectual level, between good and bad, order and disorder, but on the intuitive, between darkness and light. That is why, for instance, the much-criticised conclusion of *Metropolis*, in which Capital and Labour are reconciled through love, works completely in terms of the film (however nonsensical it may be in any other terms), since the final scene represents at once the inevitable resolution of the plot and the complete visual marriage of the two worlds—the darkness of the workers' underground city and the light of Capital's home in the air above. It is like the keystone of a great arch falling into place. (Lang himself, incidentally, thinks it kind of me to think so, but does not now find the ending at all satisfactory.)

Light is never in Lang used merely decoratively, atmospherically, but always psychologically, to convey emotional states. Often the most striking lines of continuity between his films are those signalled by the gradual evolution and refinement of a particular visual effect: the glass of mirrors which nearly always has the function—almost traditional in the German cinema—of deceiving or leading astray (*M's* victim first appears mirrored in a shop window and so does the fatal woman in *The Woman in the Window*; in *The Thousand Eyes* there is a classic piece of play with a two-way mirror); the play of flashing lights which goes as far back as *Metropolis*, reappears to haunt the mind of the hero at the end of *Scarlet Street*, and reaches its apotheosis in the superb scene of *Blue Gardenia* where Anne Baxter first comes to meet Richard Conte in his deserted newspaper office, illuminated only by the intermittent flashes of an electric sign opposite.

With Lang it is always significant whether a scene takes place by day or by night, in a well-lit or an ill-lit room, with strongly contrasted or gently diffused lighting. Mabuse in particular is always in his element in the dark—in the shadowy expressionist gambling house or the darkened hall where he demonstrates his hypnotic powers in the first film, in the darkened room where he impalpably holds sway in the second, or in the clairvoyant's consulting room and the underground nerve-centre of his organisation in the latest. In fact, when we talk about Mabuse as the force of disruption and destruction, the nihilist agent of chaos and anarchy, we are probably limiting him unduly by definition: in Lang's work what he and his kind represent is something much more basic and inescapable—the Power of Darkness itself. If one could imagine a Mabuse given to literary pursuits, he would surely recognise his own ideal image in the apocalyptic final lines of *The Dunciad*:

*Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall;
And Universal Darkness buries All.*

Gloria Grahame and Glenn Ford in "The Big Heat".



JAY
LEYDA

THE CARE OF THE PAST



THE CENTRE OF THE MOSCOW Film Festival last July was the new theatre, the Rossiya, completed (and just!) in time for the first contest screenings. On a balcony over the foyer a small exhibition was packed into five cases that few of us noticed in the first hectic days of the Festival. When I was finally pulled over to it, I found one case devoted to photographs, correspondence, work-documents, private notes, all from the Eisenstein archives—letters from Dreiser, Rolland and Moussinac, Pirandello and Feuchtwanger, notes for Vakulinchuk's funeral in *Potemkin*, a work-photo (with monkey) of *Strike* and a gloomy masquerade in Kerensky's chair during the filming of *October*, drawings for *Nevsky* and *Ivan Grozny*, and many more things than should have been crammed into such a small space—but this made each square inch of exciting value.

Another case was similarly crammed with Pudovkin photographs and documents—vivid gestures for the benefit of actors and guests, his application in 1920 for admission to the Film Institute ("now working as chemist in the 'Phosgene' Factory"), Zarkhi's first draft of *Mother*, Pudovkin's shooting script for *The End of St. Petersburg*, unexpected drawings. Dovzhenko's case was also full of drawings, even for films made by his widow since his death, scripts in Russian or Ukrainian, work-photos of his too few films—one taken during the filming of *Ivan* shows him chest-deep in the Dnieper beside the cameraman, Glider. Another case was dominated by the smooth, stubborn face and work of Vertov. The fifth showed documents from the first distant years of the Soviet cinema, photographs from *agitki* that I wish I had seen. A card stated that the contents had all come from the Central

Government Archive of Literature and Art—and I knew I had to see more of such a collection.

The Archive buildings, formidable housing for a scientific job, were a long way beyond what I had once known as the city limits of Moscow. Near by were one solid road and big apartment blocks in various stages of construction; otherwise the suburban landscape was not yet revealing its plan. I expected similar early stages within the Archive, but inside looked as fitted and as used as if it had always been there. The only give-away was the newness of the miles of shelf boxes. Dust? Not in these chambers, with their precautionary multiple windows and year-round vacuumings. I was dazzled by the number of boxes marked Gogol and Dostoyevsky; gaps on the shelves showed that someone, less dazzled, was working with these treasures.

In the office of the director I was allowed to handle Lermontov manuscripts, ladies' albums in which Pushkin had improvised (?) verses, letters from Byron and Mark Twain—and the most useful document of all, a *Guide to the Collections*. Issued last year, this volume is devoted to 'Art' as separated from 'Literature' (that second volume is almost ready to appear), 'Art' embracing painting, sculpture, architecture, music, theatre, dance, cinema. There was no time to examine this *Guide* with due attention until after I left the Archive; and perhaps this was just as well, for I would have found too many temptations to distract me from my main purpose in making this visit—the Eisenstein archive. The correspondence in the Meyerhold archive alone (its preservation was Eisenstein's last service to a respected teacher) offers fascinating insights into the Russian art world both before and after the October Revolution. And I saw, too late, that I could have read Meyerhold's scenario for his lost *Picture of Dorian Gray*.

Though the Central Archive was officially established early in 1941, the German invasion prevented real activity until several years after the end of the war. Even now there is no universal agreement on it as the only Soviet archive in these fields, and other deposits still have (and may always have) official permanence. But the Central Archive's Eisenstein collection will eventually be the only sizeable deposit of his documents anywhere in the world. Beginning two years after his death, his widow Pera Attasheva started turning over sections of his personal papers (he was an archivists' hero—he kept almost everything) to the Central Archive; and this process still continues with regular, almost monthly, additions. Y. Krasovsky, author of the *Guide's* description of the Eisenstein collection, estimates that there are between 15,000 and 18,000 documents—and this may not include the more than 1,000 drawings already available to students, as well as the exhibition of Eisenstein's drawings which is now touring Europe. In 1957 the large part of his archive that had been deposited at the Film Institute (VGIK), possibly for easier access by students, was transferred to the basic collection. The gain in unity makes up for the loss in more informal consultation of those materials.

The first thing that struck me was the number of projects I had neither known about nor listed in what I thought in 1942 was a complete account of his career. I should have known better! The unfamiliar projects date from the difficult years of 1937 and 1940: Feuchtwanger's *Der falsche Nero* was seriously considered for adaptation; Vishnevsky's scenario, *We, the Russian People*, came close to being made; and there was a second sign of his interest in gold discovery as a subject—*Gold*, a scenario by Distler about Siberian prospectors. Of his 1940 projects we have since learnt much more about his colour ideas for *Pushkin*, and he described the proposed plague film in the published fragments of his memoirs (though I had not realised that this was intended as a *scientific* film). But I was quite unprepared to see detailed preparations for a film about the Mendel Beilis trial, a theme proposed by the dramatist Sheinin. The element of embarrassment for the tsarist government was emphasised by the title: *The Prestige of the Empire*. Eisenstein's work in the theatre before *Strike*



was far more varied than I had thought—setting and costume designs for literally dozens of plays, including *Lysistrata*, *King John*, *School for Scandal*, *Tartuffe*, *Peer Gynt* . . . This was his practical education in theatre history.

Notes and drawings for his theoretical and classroom work rank next to correspondence in quantity. Anyone who has had a glimpse of his library will be prepared for a mass of papers of all sizes and utilities (old envelopes and mimeographed scripts predominate), on which he scribbled citations from his

reading for future use—from sources as unpredictable as the memoirs of Houdini and Colette. Many of his work-documents are in English, such as his sketches and minute textual study of *Richard III* for a lecture in 1937. I was amused to read, in notes for his references to *enjambement* in the first essay of *The Film Sense*, his ironical self-criticism: "A big display of knowledge in things English!" And I was saddened to read—half in English, half in Russian—the description of an obstacle (in 1942) to his work on *Ivan Grozny*: "It is a very great pity that I'm obliged to make a two-series film and not the one that is planned in the scenario *in extenso*. Also that the theme of Ivan's loneliness and the love affair—Ivan and the People—are barred . . . In form of a trilogy it is much better composed au themes and problems personal and non-personal—adamant . . ." Eventually the trilogy form he so much wished was restored to the plan, but we'll never have more than its first two parts.

I hope some day to make a deeper plunge into the fathoms of the Central Archive. I had to be content with a similar surface scratching of the All-Union State Deposit of Films—Gosfilmofond. In my short stay at their headquarters, distant from Moscow, I asked for early Soviet films that I had never seen, including the 1919 adaptation of Gorky's *Mother* (its comparison with the Zarkhi-Pudovkin version of 1926 would constitute a course in film-writing), and Ermler's first work (that I wish I had seen before finishing my history of Soviet films). Gosfilmofond was also glorying in new publications, with the first issue of its grand "Bulletin", entitled *Cinema and Time*, and the first two volumes of its annotated catalogue of all Soviet fictional films. The 2,502 films are listed with full credits and synopses, and a sometimes sad note in the silent films volume to indicate that there is no copy in the archive. But even some of these gaps are being filled with the help of other film libraries. This co-operation in matters of the past suggests an international behaviour that could be applied to matters of the future.

The Eisenstein drawings on this and the preceding page are published by courtesy of the Cinémathèque Française. This page: sketch of Malyuta's funeral procession, one of the unfilmed sequences of "Ivan the Terrible"; page 47, a sketch called "Marseilles Café", dated 1931.

INTERVIEW WITH TRUFFAUT

continued from page 37

is reproaching the film-maker for not being a journalist, since it's in the territory of journalism that these "urgent" things belong and are best expressed . . .

Personally, I have chosen fiction. This doesn't exclude ideas about life, about the world, about our society. But I like everything which muddles the trail, everything which sows doubts. My bedside book is Gide's *La Sequestrée de Poitiers*. I enjoy unexpected details, things that prove nothing, things that show how vulnerable men are. A chap was arrested after the attempt on de Gaulle, and when he was picked up in a café he said, "At seventeen I wasn't afraid of anything. Now at thirty-five I fear everything." That's an honest admission, and coming from a terrorist a rather moving one.

MARCORELLES: Your own heroes are almost always outsiders, people on the fringes of society. Is this deliberate on your part? Do you feel, like Chabrol, that one can't show a working man on the screen?

TRUFFAUT: It's true that we're all more or less anarchists, of the right or the left, and that our characters, like ourselves, tend to be unresolved. But the French cinema has scruples which you won't find, for instance, in the American. Many

French film-makers, Becker probably more than anyone, don't like dealing with subjects they don't know well.

In fact I did once work in a factory, as a welder, and I remember it well enough to show working men honestly. But what point is there in filming people who are engaged eight hours a day on work they don't enjoy? It's hypocritical to exalt their work, and just as hypocritical to encourage their resignation to it . . . At that period of my life, I used to try to "escape" by mentally re-creating the three or four films I'd seen on the Sunday; and, believe me, nothing on earth would have dragged me to a film about factory workers. There are half-a-dozen Communist directors in France and about fifteen left-wingers. You should ask them to make these films about working-class problems.

When I decide to make a film, it's generally the result of a plastic idea, or an *ambiance*, or a need to contradict my last film. I might film a working man, but only if I was led to this naturally—not as a deliberate act. Of course, though, I'm aware that the French cinema shows us many more idle and rich characters than ordinary working people . . . Next to children—who always play a part in my films—I'm interested especially in thieves, beggars and prostitutes, the asocial people I wouldn't like to see society rid itself of. And would society really want to . . . ?

BOOK REVIEWS

Mr. LAUREL AND Mr. HARDY, by John McCabe. Illustrated. (Doubleday, New York, \$4.50.)

HARPO SPEAKS! by Harpo Marx, with Rowland Barber. Illustrated. (Gollancz, 25s.)

LAUREL AND HARDY remained pure untainted folk art long after it was smart for cineastes and intellectuals to admire Keaton, Langdon and Chaplin. Until a year or so ago their dotting fans were the audiences of the fleapits which still showed reissues of their films, and the music halls in which, in 1954, they made what proved to be their ultimate tour. Since then, of course, they have come into their own, critically speaking. Their films are shown at the National Film Theatre and it is very respectable to admire them. Oddly enough it is harder nowadays to find them in fleapits. In the meantime, too, Oliver Norvell Hardy—elephantine, graceful and gracious Ollie, beautifully innocent and innocently beautiful—has died.

At last they have found a worthy biographer. Dr. John McCabe (who began his book seven years ago, when he met Laurel and Hardy in Birmingham) is Associate Professor of Dramatic Art at New York University. He writes not as an academic, however, but as an idolator. A book of such affection and enthusiasm could be forgiven much, and there is not much to forgive, though Dr. McCabe whets one's appetite for more in the way of hard documentation.

His researches confirm that Stan Laurel was the real creator of the films. His inexhaustible enthusiasm for work—for working out and working up gags, for taking a hand with the direction, though with such tact that no director ever seems to have felt pushed aside, and above all for montage—explains the continuity of style that marks the films from Stan and Ollie's first teaming in *Putting the Pants on Philip* to their last sad attempt at filming in France in 1951, with *Atoll K*. Tentative in the early films, frustrated in the last ones by lack of creative freedom, the signature is one, and it is Laurel's. Hardy, it appears, was much less interested in the creative side, though his years in the studios had given him a solid grounding in film techniques. Often he did not even bother to see the rushes, but left them to Stan while he hurried off for a game of golf—his ruling passion.

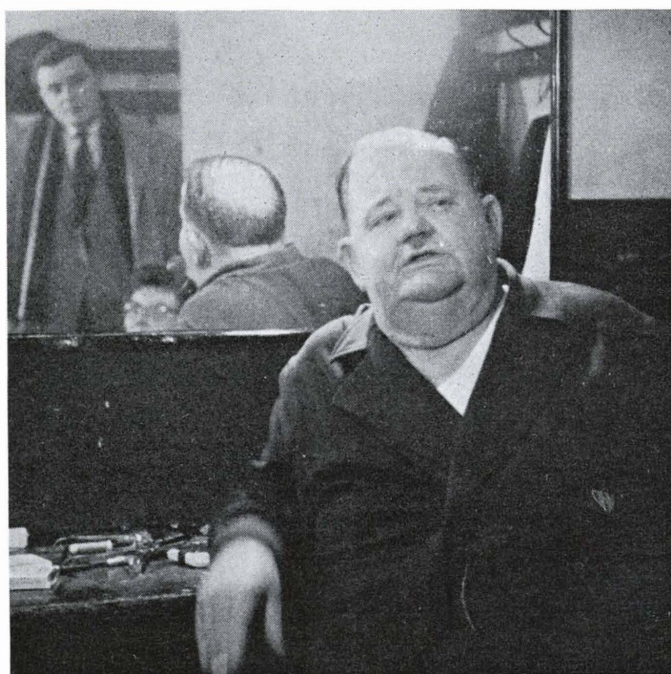
Mr. Laurel and Mr. Hardy has the almost unique distinction of not intruding upon the private life of its subjects except where it seems directly relevant to their work. At the same time—and this is something different—Dr. McCabe manages to convey their private characters. He succeeds in recalling the simplicity and modesty, the kindness and courtesy, the childlike goodness which inevitably overwhelmed anyone on first (or subsequent) meeting with these two great artists. Oddly enough, in private life the personalities were more or less reversed. Oliver was quiet, sensitive and reserved (he never completely understood why people thought him funny and remained terribly self-conscious about his great size); Stan is bubbling with mirth and wit. The gentlest epitaph for Ollie comes from his elder sister, as recorded by Dr. McCabe: "He was such a funny thing and such a dear thing." She adds her intriguing psychological speculations: "As I said, he always ate a lot. Once he ran away from military school because he said they didn't feed him enough. He refused to go back until his mother had made him twenty baking powder biscuits which he ate at one sitting. I think that maybe he always ate so much because he missed the father he lost when he was ten."

As to the screen characters, Dr. McCabe, with Stan's help, has traced their exact evolution. Analysing many of the films (not

enough of them: more detailed examinations of the features would be valuable as well as fun. And why is there no mention of *County Hospital* and only a brief word on *Way Out West*?) he discovers the origins of all their little loved mannerisms—Stan's cry, Ollie's tie-twiddle and desperate appeal to the camera when Stan's foolishness exceeds bounds, and so on. He succinctly examines the reasons for their perennial and universal success. For one thing they looked funny individually and funnier still together, in contrast—the courtly, pompous Southern gentleman, and the skinny little sat-upon Lancashire lad. Then there is the humour of their context. In their ignorance and innocence they are at perpetual loggerheads with the universe, "out of tune with the sins and follies of the world . . . Their ignorance is truly invincible because it is the angelic armour of perpetual childhood." And their humour is true. "Keep a semblance of belief, however broad," Stan Laurel advises. The characters they have created are as real and human as Falstaff or Mr. Macmillan; and they are played with the utmost seriousness. Eddie Cantor noted: "They play everything as if it might be Macbeth or Hamlet. That, to me, has always been a true sign of comic genius."

Finally, of course, there is sheer technique. Dr. McCabe calls the discipline necessary for a clown "form": "The modern screen comedian lacks it . . . The keystone of a great comedian's talent lies in his form." Laurel and Hardy were perfectionists. Marcel Marceau, quoted by Dr. McCabe, speaks of the debt which all mimes in the world owe to Stan Laurel. The point (as Dr. McCabe stresses in his early chapters) is the arduous apprenticeship served by Laurel and Hardy. It was no accident that Chaplin and Laurel both came from the same English music hall troupe. Perhaps at no time in the history of the theatre has there been such a flowering of performers as in the music hall of the later Victorian and Edwardian eras, and American vaudeville of the early years of the century. The secret was the possibility to play, polish and study the same material year in and year out. The long and patient process was rather like perfecting a lawn or polishing a diamond. For all the fake nostalgia that surrounds these old days that produced Chaplin and Keaton, Langdon, Laurel and Hardy, Jack Benny, the Marx Brothers and Eddie Cantor, it is probably perfectly true that they don't make them like that any more. The comedy of Shelley Berman and Mort Sahl is a brilliant intellectual contrivance, an *ersatz*. Still, whether they make them or not, there cannot be another Laurel and Hardy; and, in fashion or out, there can never be an act that was more warmly loved.

Harpo Marx is one of the truly great clowns; and he too was bred through a twenty-year apprenticeship to vaudeville. He still awaits a biographer who can adequately evaluate his contribution to art and laughter. Meanwhile we have *Harpo Speaks!* done "with", as they say, Rowland Barber. (I incline to the theory that all ghosting is done by a big electronic machine in Princeton; at least all ghosts write in the same indistinguishable flip columnese.) The book is



Oliver Hardy and (reflected in mirror) his biographer, John McCabe. The photograph was taken in January, 1954, during Laurel and Hardy's last music hall tour in this country.

hard work: you must struggle through almost 500 pages of personality anecdotes and tales of ancient pinocle games to discover the colourful circumstances of Harpo's early life (petty fraud and brother pianist), and such curious items as that he wet himself with fright on his stage debut and that the brothers' first appearance in London at the Coliseum was a fiasco. Only very occasionally are there oblique insights into his working methods, the building of his character and material. Still, he sounds a nice man.

DAVID ROBINSON

BOOKS RECEIVED

COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHY FOR PLEASURE. By Edward S. Bomback. (Fountain Press, 3s. 6d.)

8MM MOVIE MAKING FOR PLEASURE. By Philip Grosset. (Fountain Press, 3s. 6d.)

FILM REVIEW. By F. Maurice Speed. (Macdonald, 12s. 6d.)

ITALIAN REGIONAL TALES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. Edited by Archibald Colquhoun. (Oxford University Press, 16s.) *This collection includes the first English translation of the story by Boito on which Visconti's Senso is based.*

THE LIVING SCREEN. By Roger Manvell. (Harrap, 15s.)

CORRESPONDENCE

The Cost of Independence

The Editor, SIGHT AND SOUND

SIR,—As an independent producer and director I was naturally most interested in your enquiry into "The Cost of Independence". I was particularly intrigued by the remarks of Mr. David Kingsley, when he suggested that finance might be obtained from patrons of the arts or from industry.

Since I have a script which deals in semi-documentary (De Sica) style with the plight of the West Indians coming to this country, I thought this would be an ideal chance to test this theory out. I accordingly approached several well-known millionaire patrons of the arts and companies with West Indian interests. The result has been negative—although the script has been generally approved. The trouble is that patrons of the arts do not consider the film an art form, and industry apparently has its own troubles with the present credit squeeze. I generally quoted Mr. Kingsley's remarks and it was suggested to me that it was rather presumptuous to expect backing when the film industry itself was apathetic. Several M.P.s were most encouraging and wished me every success, but unfortunately were not able to offer any assistance apart from giving me introductions to possible supporters. In view of Mr. John Terry's remarks I also approached the government agency, the National Film Finance Corporation. I have now been advised that "although this is undoubtedly an unusual and controversial subject" they could not interest themselves unless I first found a distributor to make a financial guarantee in the usual way. So we are back where we started!

Although I believe this is a very good story and distributors

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agree that it has certain points of appeal, it is only a small budget picture (£20,000) and does not conform to the small budget formula demanded by distributors. I suggest that this is a case in point where a Government fund should be made available for sponsorship as in Holland and certain other countries.

Yours faithfully,

DONOVAN WINTER

7 St. James' House,
Kensington Square,
London, W.8.

Cinema of Appearance

SIR,—I would like to touch on one point in the article "Cinema of Appearance" by Gabriel Pearson and Eric Rhode, in the Autumn issue of *SIGHT AND SOUND*. It is that in which they declare themselves bewildered because *Breathless* and *Shoot the Pianist*, "according to our theories, shouldn't work."

But this is precisely one of the beauties of the film medium: that you can do virtually anything you like with it once you establish what you are doing as a convention. As soon as the audience-mind grasps the chosen convention (or, at a pinch, even the convention that there *isn't* going to be a convention) it can find its way around. It will only be exasperated if "conventional" convention is flouted to no purpose.

The really remarkable thing though is that, with such a malleable medium to command, we should be content with so pedestrian a technique in the majority of what are otherwise quite adventurous productions. Film, having the immediacy of thought, offers the lively mind an opportunity unparalleled by any of its brother arts.

Occasionally a meteor in the shape of an Orson Welles, a Truffaut, a Resnais or a Godard orbits into our midst—only to be effectively dowsed by the Trade after a short-lived burst of glory. (The trade, after all, is too busy looking over its shoulder practising hindsight ever to be interested in thinking of foresight.)

The bewilderment of Messrs. Pearson and Rhode should be expended rather on the circumstance of a director's being allowed to use the medium as he wishes than on the film's response to such use.

Yours faithfully,

DARREL CATLING

Travellers Rest,
Church Street,
Hatfield,
Herts.

Maurice Tourneur

SIR,—I was rather distressed to learn of the death of Maurice Tourneur. He was indeed "one of the great pictorialists of the screen," as Mr. O'Laoghaire says in the letter published in your Autumn issue. Every frame in a Tourneur film is beautifully composed, as the *Treasure Island* still you reproduced so well exemplifies. Actually, the original frame is even more aesthetically pleasing, as, by some odd mechanical quirk, you have laterally inverted the still!

A few people have asked me who the players in the still are. Reading from the left (as printed), we have Charles Hill Mailes, Bull Montana, Lon Chaney, Shirley Mason and Charles Ogle. Mr. Chaney had a dual role (Pew and another of the pirates—I forget which), Miss Mason was Jim Hawkins (!) and Mr. Ogle Long John Silver.

Mr. O'Laoghaire has some useful information to impart, but I'm afraid he rather spoils its veracity by his opening sentence in the last paragraph. Tourneur's Hollywood career did not end with *The Last of the Mohicans* (1920), and all the location scenes in this film (more than 60% of the total footage) were directed not by Tourneur, but by Clarence Brown. Tourneur's subsequent Hollywood films were: *The Foolish Matrons* (again co-directed with Clarence Brown), *Lorna Doone*, *The Christian* (Mr. O'Laoghaire mentions both these earlier in his piece. Admittedly, a great deal of *The Christian* was filmed on location in England, but surely that does not make it any the less a Hollywood film), *The Isle of Lost Ships*, *The Brass Bottle*, *Jealous Husbands*, *Torment*, *The White Moth*, *Never the Twain Shall Meet*, *Sporting Life*, *Clothes Make the Pirate*, *Aloma of the South Seas*, *Old Loves and New*. In the latter half of 1926, Tourneur was signed by M-G-M to direct an adaptation of Jules Verne's *The Mysterious Island*. This was the time when Mayer and Thalberg were concocting the iniquitous "supervisor" system. Tourneur and Thalberg had words. In the middle of shooting, Tourneur resigned and departed abruptly for France.

I also enjoyed the conversations with Nicholas Ray and Joseph Losey, written up by Penelope Houston and John Gillett. One small error: Losey's enforced silence was broken not by *Time Without Pity* (1956) but by *The Man on the Beach* (1955).

Of these two directors, Losey's talent strikes me as the more impressive, although he has not yet produced the really perfect film this talent would seem to presage. There comes a time in every Losey film when his inventiveness seems to falter. The brilliant opening of *Time Without Pity* is followed by compositions and camera set-ups so pedestrian, Raoul Walsh could have done better with the patch over his other eye. Even *The Criminal*, which is undoubtedly Losey's best film to date, has its moments of uninspired tedium. And I was surprised the article didn't mention his predilection for depicting erratic behaviour. Even the most incidental characters are affected: the dart-throwing editor in *Time Without Pity*, for instance; or the piano tuner in *The Criminal*.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN HOWARD REID

International Cinematographic Association,
Box 3895, G.P.O.
Sydney, Australia.

La Terra Trema

SIR,—In the introduction to the National Film Theatre's Visconti programme (August–October 1961) it is stated that "The National Film Theatre introduced the work of Luchino Visconti in 1956 with the first British showings of *Ossessione* and *La Terra Trema*." In fact, *La Terra Trema* was shown at the Edinburgh Film Festival on August 25, 1950—no less than six years earlier. The National Film Theatre is doing such excellent work that it is surely unnecessary to make bogus claims of this kind.

Yours faithfully,
H. FORSYTH HARDY
Honorary Secretary.

Edinburgh Film Festival,
Film House,
3 Randolph Crescent,
Edinburgh, 3.

Mr. Richard Roud, programmes officer of the National Film Theatre, offers his apologies. In a mood of self-abasement, he says, he would also like to point out another inaccuracy: Visconti's Ossessione was not shown for the first time by the National Film Theatre. The credit for this, as for so many other "firsts", should go to Miss Olwen Vaughan and the New London Film Society.

STATEMENT REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, JULY 2, 1946 AND JUNE 11, 1960 (74 Stat. 208) SHOWING THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION OF SIGHT AND SOUND, published quarterly.

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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 10th day of October, 1961. P. W. Jones (a Commissioner for Oaths).

VON STROHEIM: THE LEGEND AND THE FACT

continued from page 23

This is the extent of my information to date. I've published it in the hope that it may revive memories among his contemporaries and that they may allow us fuller knowledge of the real youth of Erich von Stroheim (let us keep the pseudonym he made illustrious), and perhaps also of his first eight years in America (1906-14), about which nothing is known. These few dry but incontestable facts are enough to dissipate the legend so deliberately and masterfully constructed; and they already help us to a better understanding both of the man and the artist. Our admiration for both remains undiminished—is if anything increased.

No one would think of reproaching a poor immigrant, trying to earn his living as an extra in the cinema of 1914, for imposing himself on his employers not only through his talent for character acting—a talent whose full range we only now appreciate—but also through a fictitious autobiography. Since this stratagem held up for forty years, and helped to ensure his material existence (while his real genius as a director earned him only rebuffs and insults), he would have been mad to give it up.

The obsession with the officer caste which marks his work takes on a different significance, however, from the moment we know that it no longer corresponds to a lived experience. The character he created was not himself—which makes the authenticity and command with which he played the part all the more fascinating. James Cruze, who directed him in *The Great Gabbo*, said of von Stroheim: "He never enters a room; he makes an entrance." It's no wonder that he gave his finest performance not on the screen or stage, but in his daily living.

Denis Marion is General Secretary of the International Federation of Film Critics, film critic of "Le Soir" of Brussels, and has written for as well as about the cinema. His books include a biography of Defoe; his screen credits include work on André Malraux's "Espoir".

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Stills:
UNITED ARTISTS for *West Side Story*, *The Misfits*, *The Defiant Ones*, *La Notte*.
20th CENTURY-FOX for *The Innocents*, *Bachelor Flat*, *The Hustler*.
PARAMOUNT PICTURES, for *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *Too Late Blues*.
BLC/COLUMBIA PICTURES for *La Dolce Vita*, *La Vérité*, *The Big Heat*.
BLC/BRITISH LION for *On Friday at Eleven*.
UNIVERSAL-INTERNATIONAL for *Freud*.
RKO RADIO PICTURES for *Citizen Kane*.
CONTEMPORARY FILMS for *La Règle du Jeu*, *L'Atlante*, *Ugetsu Monogatari*.
UNIFRANCE FILM for *Jules et Jim*, *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad*.
UNITALIA for *L'Assassino*.
PARIS FILM PRODUCTION for *The Eclipse*.
SOVEXPORT FILM for *Story of the Turbulent Years*.
FILMS OF POLAND for *Innocent Sorcerers*.
FILM POLSKI for *Passengers*.
TITANUS for *Il Posto*.
ARCO/CINE DEL DUCA for *Accattone*.
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FILMS DU CARROSSE/AJYM for *Paris Nous Appartient*.
STORYBOARD, INC. for *Of Stars and Men*.
FC FILM UNIT, INC. for *Guns of the Trees*.
CCC/CRITERION for *The Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse*.
NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE for *The Wedding March*, *Metropolis*, *Spione*, *Dr. Mabuse*, photograph of Fritz Lang.
DAVID ROBINSON for photograph of Oliver Hardy.

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A GUIDE TO CURRENT FILMS

Films of special interest to *SIGHT AND SOUND* readers are denoted by one, two, three or four stars

ADA (M-G-M) Susan Hayward, on her second-best broomstick, as the scarlet woman who cleans up a corrupt state legislature and becomes the Governor's lady. The sumptuously improbable plot needs a more brazen touch than Daniel Mann's, but some choice passages survive triumphant. (Dean Martin, Wilfrid Hyde White. Metrocolor, CinemaScope.)

***ADOLESCENTES, LES (Gala)** New Wave subject, a schoolgirl's 24-hour affair with a mature friend of the family, with baroque accessories borrowed from Fellini and Bergman, staged meticulously by Old Guard director Alberto Lattuada. (Catherine Spaak, Christian Marquand, Jean Sorel.)

******ANNEE DERNIERE A MARIENBAD, L' (Compton-Cameo)** Resnais and Robbe-Grillet's experiment with time and reality. Hauntingly beautiful, a masterpiece of applied technique, and not half as difficult as it has been made to sound. See it and make up your own mind. (Giorgio Albertazzi, Delphine Seyrig, Sacha Pitoëff. Dyaliscope.) *Reviewed.*

ATLANTIS, THE LOST CONTINENT (M-G-M) Greek fisher-lad rescues haughty shipwrecked Princess, sails her back to decadent, war-lusting Atlantis (Mayan-Roman-Metropolis-Assyrian-Tartar-Manhattan décor), survives the Ordeal of Fire and Water, frees the slaves and escapes during volcanic eruption. Papier mâché copy of current Italian spectacles. (Anthony Hall, Joyce Taylor, John Dall; director, George Pal. Metrocolor.)

****BACHELOR FLAT (Fox)** Tuesday Weld disrupting life of staid professor Terry-Thomas on a seaboard campus. Stagy plot, Shirley Temple bobbysoxer vintage, slow-starting but enlivened by a dachshund and some of Frank Tashlin's better gags. (Richard Beymer, Celeste Holm. DeLuxe Color, CinemaScope.) *Reviewed.*

***BACHELOR IN PARADISE (M-G-M)** Bob Hope disrupting life in a suburban American dream community. Soapy love stuff (Lana Turner) and direction (Jack Arnold), but for the most part the wisecracks come fast and true. (Janis Paige, Paula Prentiss, Jim Hutton. Metrocolor, CinemaScope.)

BEST OF ENEMIES, THE (BLC/Columbia) Improbable, mildly satirical anti-war film, set in Abyssinia at the start of World War II, with two Italian writers and one British, an Italian producer (Dino de Laurentiis) and a British director (Guy Hamilton), David Niven as a British major and Alberto Sordi as an Italian captain. (Michael Wilding, Harry Andrews, Amedeo Nazzari. Technicolor, Technirama.)

BLOOD AND ROSES (Paramount) Updated travesty of Sheridan LeFanu's psychological horror story *Carmilla*. Hadrian's Villa makes an elegant setting for lusty lady vampires, but it is Vadim's insensitive direction and the strident dubbing which chill the blood. (Mel Ferrer, Elsa Martinelli, Annette Vadim. Technicolor, Technirama.)

BLUE HAWAII (Paramount) Elvis Presley escapes the cloying demands of his snobbish Southern mother (Angela Lansbury) to become guide to a girls' tour of Oahu and Kauai. Elvis sings 14 numbers and celebrates his maturity by lecturing, then spanking, a mixed-up young miss. (Joan Blackman, Nancy Walters; director, Norman Taurog. Technicolor, Panavision.)

BRIDGE TO THE SUN (M-G-M) Attempt to chart the travails and the triumphs of interracial wartime marriage (between Tennessee backwoodsgirl Carroll Baker and Japanese diplomat James Shigeta) which somehow manages to prove it can be duller than the ordinary kind. (Director, Etienne Perier.)

***COMANCHEROS, THE (Fox)** Texas Ranger John Wayne and New Orleans dude Stuart Whitman track down a settlement of bloodthirsty outlaws running guns to the Comanches. Rambling script, ambivalent direction (Michael Curtiz), but quite a rousing climax and several bursts of tongue-in-cheek roughhouse. (Ina Balin, Nehemiah Persoff, Lee Marvin. DeLuxe Color, CinemaScope.)

DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE, THE (BLC/British Lion/Pax) Wolf Mankowitz's forecast of possible world disaster when atomic explosions tilt the earth's orbit. *Daily Express* first with the news. (Edward Judd, Leo McKern, Janet Munro; director, Val Guest. Dyaliscope.)

DEVIL AT 4 O'CLOCK, THE (BLC/Columbia) Spencer Tracy as an Irish-American brandy priest and Frank Sinatra as a good-bad, Italo-American convict rise to the occasion when a French island colony is menaced by a volcano, laying down their lives so that a lot of little lepers can live. (Kerwin Mathews, Jean Pierre Aumont; director, Mervyn LeRoy. Technicolor.)

***EL CID (Rank)** Solemn pageant about the noble Spanish knight who united Moors and Christians under one king. A likable cast struggles vainly with two-dimensional characters, and there is an arid hour or two between the film's highlight—a mounted, single-combat scene—and its final battle; but Anthony Mann's compositions are often pretty. (Charlton Heston, Sophia Loren, John Fraser. Technicolor, Super-Technirama 70.)

***EXODUS (United Artists)** Triple-decker history of the foundation of Israel, adapted from Leon Uris's cantankerous best-seller. History thinly sliced for the box-office, with a good word for everyone; even for Preminger admirers, it's a long, hard slog to the finish. (Paul Newman, Eva Marie Saint, Ralph Richardson, Sal Mineo. Technicolor, Super-Panavision 70.)

IN THE DOGHOUSE (Rank) Newly qualified young vet buys a run-down practice and proves to his unscrupulous fellow student and rival that honesty pays. Jarringly sentimental satire on the British passion for their friends of feather, hoof, pad and claw. (Leslie Phillips, Peggy Cummins, Hattie Jacques, James Booth; director, Darcy Conyers.)

*****ISLAND OF SHAME, THE (Gala)** In fact Buñuel's *The Young One*, a raw jab at racism and hypocrisy set on an island inhabited by a game warden, a

hunted Negro, a priest and a vulnerable young girl. A highly personal work, abominably acted. (Zachary Scott, Bernie Hamilton, Kay Meersman.)

***JUDGMENT AT NUREMBERG (United Artists)** Stanley Kramer's high-minded examination of German guilt and Allied justice at the Nuremberg trials. Orthodox direction and the ill-judged inclusion of at least one guest star, but courtroom polemics sustain interest for much of the time. (Spencer Tracy, Marlene Dietrich, Maximilian Schell, Clift, Lancaster, Widmark and Judy Garland.) *Reviewed.*

KAPO (Gala) Dreadful experiences of a Jewish girl (Susan Strasberg) who denies her faith, sells her virtue, becomes a concentration camp wardress to save her skin, but finally atones with a Hebrew prayer on her dying lips. Implausible. (Laurent Terzieff, Emmanuelle Riva; director, Gillo Pontecorvo.)

KING OF KINGS (M-G-M) The Life of Christ, as filmed in Spain by Nicholas Ray, Samuel Bronston and assorted international cast. Severely mauled by the Press, for reasons unhappily too obvious to need repeating. (Jeffrey Hunter, Frank Thring, Ron Randell, Viveca Lindfors, Hurd Hatfield, Siobhan McKenna, Robert Ryan. Technicolor, Super-Technirama 70.)

****KNIFE, THE (Mondial)** Dutch director Fons Rademakers' study of a boy of thirteen whose rich, widowed mother is having an affair. Convincing picture of small town life in Holland and of the gap between the child and adult world, flawed by too much Freud and too little technical assurance. (Reitze van der Linden, Ellen Vogel, Paul Cammermans.) *Reviewed.*

******LOLA (Sebricon)** Jacques Demy's first feature, a tragi-comic labyrinth of coincidence and compressed time through which one arrives at all manner of truths about love. Optimistic, clear-minded, done with a dashing sense of style and beautifully set in Nantes. (Anouk Aimée, Marc Michel. FranScope.)

MAN WHO WAGGED HIS TAIL, THE (Gala) Peter Ustinov as the Dickens of a mean old Brooklyn landlord is changed by magic into the dog he essentially is. Undernourished fantasy. (Pablito Calvo; director, Ladislao Vajda.)

******NOTTE, LA (United Artists)** Antonioni's most courageous and penetrating examination yet of the problems of love and marriage. In some ways, a return to the formal rigour of *Cronaca di un Amore*; in any case, a masterpiece. (Jeanne Moreau, Marcello Mastroianni, Monica Vitti.) *Reviewed.*

****ODD OBSESSIONS (Warner-Pathé)** Kon Ichikawa's study of an aging voyeur and his tainted family. In turn clinical, grimly ironic, silly, but redeemed by magnificent DaieiScope *mise-en-scène* and the muted Daiei Color. (Machiko Kyo, Ganjiro Nakamura, Tatsuya Nakadai.)

PETTICOAT PIRATES (Warner-Pathé) 150 irate Wrens commandeer a warship and show their mettle during NATO manoeuvres. Vigorous but ineffectual slapstick vehicle for Charlie Drake, who is only at his best in two sequences cut adrift from the rest of the plot. (Anne Heywood, Cecil Parker; director, David MacDonald. Technicolor, CinemaScope.)

***PIT AND THE PENDULUM (Anglo Amalgamated)** Roger Corman self-consciously repeating the rococo elaborations of his previous Poe film *House of Usher*, but failing to find the same happy strain of elegant humour. Poorly acted, but worth seeing for its lurid finale and the sight of Vincent Price running amok in an inquisitor's cowl. (John Kerr. Pathé Color, Panavision.)

***POCKETFUL OF MIRACLES (United Artists)** Capra's remake of his *Lady for a Day*, with Bette Davis as the Broadway peddler whose real background has to be kept, by half the New York underworld, from her daughter. Not really artful enough to recapture a mood which died with Damon Runyon. (Glenn Ford, Hope Lange. Technicolor, Panavision.) *Reviewed.*

******REGLE DU JEU, LA (Contemporary)** Renoir's tragi-farce centring on a week-end party at a country chateau makes a surgical study of a debased element in immediately pre-war French society. An unabridged version of what is still one of the most remarkable French films ever made. (Dalio, Carette, Nora Gregor, Jean Renoir.)

SECOND TIME AROUND (Fox) New York widow Debbie Reynolds travels to Arizona in 1912 to make a new life for herself and her two children. Genial but uneasy blend of Western, situation comedy, parody, farce and romance. (Steve Forrest, Andy Griffith, Thelma Ritter; director, Vincent Sherman. DeLuxe Color, CinemaScope.)

SOUTH PACIFIC (Fox) High, wide and generally unhandsome version of the stage musical, stodgily directed by Joshua Logan. Happily the songs survive a welter of eccentric colour effects and jungle décor. (Rossano Brazzi, Mitzi Gaynor, John Kerr. Technicolor, Todd-AO.)

***THUNDER OF DRUMS, A (M-G-M)** Vernacular, detailed yet oddly perfunctory attempt to invade Ford's territory of the Apache-jammed 1870 frontier. The story, an honourable if dull account of the making of a man and a soldier chafing under the command of a grizzled veteran, is further hampered by a laborious love angle. (Richard Boone, George Hamilton; director, Joseph Newman. Metrocolor, CinemaScope.)

VERITE, LA (BLC/Columbia) Brigitte Bardot as wayward girl from the provinces on trial for murdering her lover. Authoritative courtroom cut-and-thrust, craftily stage-managed by Clouzot, but it's a long weary trail through the flashbacks. (Charles Vanel, Paul Meurisse, Sami Frey, Marie-José Nat.)

***YOUNG ONES, THE (Warner-Pathé)** Brash stab at a British teenage musical which borrows shamelessly from everything of its kind since *Babes on Broadway*. Almost redeemed by its punch, and by Robert Morley having a field-day as a tycoon of the take-over bid. (Cliff Richards; director, Sidney Furie. Technicolor, CinemaScope.)

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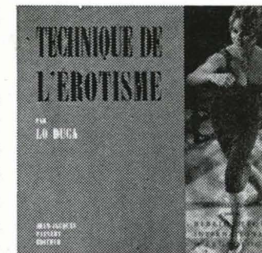
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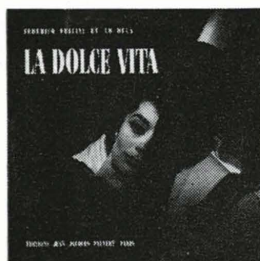
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